THE

CHURCH OF ST. SIFFRID.

BRITISH MUSEUM
30 SEP 71

THE

CHURCH OF ST. SIFFRID.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Non mesto, non valor, non riverenza
Nè d'età nè di grado, nè di legge;
Non peno di vergogna; non rispetto
Nè d'amor nè di sangue; non memoria
Di ricevuto ben, nè finalmente
Cosa si venerabile, o si santa,
O si giusto esser può, ch'a quella vasta
Cupidigia d'honori, a quella ingorda
Fama d'aver, violabil sia.

GUARINI.

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THE
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CHAP. XXI.

Something there is more needful than expence;
And something previous ev'n to taste—'tis sense:
Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,
And, though no science, fairly worth the seven.

POPE.

THE common civilities that relations sometimes do and sometimes do not shew each other obliged Ethelreda to exert herself, and endeavour to shake off the apathy that stole upon her. It was necessary she should accept an invitation of Lady Mariamne's, who was never de-

ficient in any of the ceremonials of politeneſs. It had often been repeated, and as often evaded; but at laſt, at the very preſſing inſtances of Sir Francis L'Eſterling, Ethelreda agreed to paſs three or four days at Kilgaren.

Sir Francis, in the courſe of a few months, had advanced rapidly with what he called his improvements. The grotto was quite finiſhed; a ſort of hollow way, bored round one ſide of the hill, admitting the light at each end. The whole was ſtill a profound ſecret to Lady Mariamne, who invariably never condeſcended to aſk a ſingle queſtion about any thing that was doing by Sir Francis's orders, that ſhe might have the pleaſure of diſliking it when finiſhed. And Sir Francis's anxiety to have Ethelreda at his houſe was merely to conſult her on his plans; becauſe Lord Caerleon had ſpoken with rapture of her taſte and knowledge in architecture. She was therefore no ſooner

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in the houſe than Sir Francis entreated ſhe would look at ſome ſtatues he had bought in Rome at immoderate prices. Some, he ſaid, *were* copies, and ſome real antiques.

"I want your aſſiſtance, Mrs. Carloville, in the placing of the Gladiator combatendo, the Amazone, and the Ercole.—I ſhall put them in the grotto," ſaid Sir Francis, lowering his voice to a whiſper.

"What! You do not mean to put theſe odious undraped figures where *I* may ever ſee them?" ſaid Lady Mariamne.

"And I have a pair of Termini," continued Sir Francis: "I think, Mrs. Carloville, to put them at the entrance; and a *Torſo* which I am at a loſs how to diſpoſe of; it is the moſt invaluable of my whole collection."

"A hideous, unſhapely, broken lump!" exclaimed Lady Mariamne.

"Professor Winckelmann would have fallen into raptures at the sight of it!" sighed Sir Francis.

"Or have discovered another spinning Hercules!" said Ethelreda with an arch smile. "But," continued she, "I agree with Lady Mariamne, it is so little of an *ornament*, that it is only fit to *enrich* a museum."

"I have some very fine Nola vases, in which I mean to plant orange-trees: those, I imagine, will please you, Lady Mariamne?" said he, in hopes of obtaining pardon for having made the grotto of Posilippo, so contrary to her Ladyship's injunctions.

"What *foundation* have you to suppose so, Sir Francis?" said the disobliging lady. "I hate orange-trees!—I hate the country!"—Sir Francis made no answer, but, shewing some plans of architecture, he submissively asked Ethelreda what master she preferred?

"What

"What do you think of Giuglio Romano?—Perhaps you prefer Vignola? or Palladio? or Schamozzi?" Sir Francis did not give her time to anſwer; it was too great a pleaſure to him to repeat the names himſelf. "I intend to follow the Roman villas in my improvements;" delighted to meet with ſome one who could underſtand him, and who had the politeneſs to liſten to him: "I think the four porticos deſigned by Giuglio Romano, at Villa Madama, are a perfect model," continued he: "as well as I remember, my Lord Caerleon admired them prodigiouſly! I intend, too," ſaid he ſpeaking rapidly, "to erect an amphitheatrical arcade, ſupporting ſtone baluſtrades and terraces, with fountains and falls of water; but *no* trees—none but orange and myrtle, in vaſes. I am fixed not to have a ſingle ſhrub or tree in my garden beſides; nor even a flower; for my ſenſes are ſo perfectly *Italian*, I

think the perfume of them extremely offensive."

"Then I must tell you, Sir Francis, you had better get a set of *English* ones immediately; for I shall fill the house throughout with roses, carnations, and jessamine."

In these tiresome conversations passed the two days of Ethelreda's visit, uninterrupted by other company. In the mean time great preparations were making by Sir Francis for a grand fête; and when Ethelreda proposed to depart, her company was so strenuously requested, she was absolutely constrained to lengthen her visit.

When Conway reached London, he was not much more reconciled to his unfortunate fate than when he left Strathener; but he was displeased with himself for leaving the country without first seeing Ethelreda, and hearing from herself why she abandoned him. The incongruity

gruity of the Comte de Clerac's proceedings seemed to strike him for the first time; and he began to apprehend that all his misfortunes had been occasioned by his own precipitancy. But his professional situation prevented him from returning; he was ordered to be ready to receive his sailing orders at a moment's warning; for which he impatiently waited, when he received information that his destination was changed. He was ordered to prepare for a long absence, and to be ready to sail in a week's time upon secret service.

No sooner did Conway gain this intelligence, than his resolutions were unalterably taken: he left London instantly, positively determined, provided Ethelreda condescended to justify her conduct to him, to put it out of the power of any future accident to separate them. He suffered nothing to delay him on the road, and reached St. Siffrid's Castle on the

the morning of the day fixed for the fête at Kilgaren-hall.

Sir Francis promised himself great celebrity from his intended fête: he had spared no expence to make it striking and elegant; he had given out it was to be a select thing; though half the county was invited, and cards of invitation in whole packs had been sent to London. The whole arrangement was laid before Lord Caerleon and Mrs. Carloville, who highly approved of every part of the entertainment — Ethelreda more from civility, than from any pleasure she expected to find in it. Indeed she would willingly have given it up entirely, to have been spared the trouble of contributing towards it; for Sir Francis had requested beds for some of his guests at St. Siffrid's Castle, an accommodation she could by no means refuse to grant, as the company were *quartered by stores* upon every house in the neighbourhood for many miles round.

Sir

Sir Francis, who was extremely recherché in his ideas of excellence, was full of fears, as the day approached, that the entertainment would not be equal to the expectations of his guests. "I wish," said he, speaking to Lord Caerleon of the music, "I wish it had been possible to have procured Concialini from Berlin, and Marchesini from Naples: we shall have but few fine voices, and those only what *London* produces!"

Notwithstanding his fears, Sir Francis intended the music should make the most interesting part of the amusement. He himself had set an air in one of Metastasio's operas: the rest of the music, entirely new for the occasion, was composed by a celebrated master. All the first dancers, as well as the best musical performers, were engaged to assist in the opera, and diversify the entertainment with ballets. Not to lose sight of Roman manners, Sir Francis had given out that

all the company was expected to appear masqued, and in Carnival habits.

The anxiously-expected day arrived at last. The morning was as fine as Sir Francis himself could have desired; and, though the first of September, the day and evening were excessively warm, and the moon rose with surprising splendour. Between eight and nine the gardens were crowded with numerous grotesque figures; for Sir Francis had fixed upon a *rural* fête; and the opera was to be performed in the Teatro di Verdura, which was adorned with the most brilliant scenes; whilst innumerable coloured lamps, arranged with great elegance about the theatre, together with an amazing profusion in every part of the gardens, gave so great a brilliancy to the coup d'œil, that the whole seemed the effect of enchantment. Sir Francis was delighted he had not yet destroyed the trees in his pleasure-grounds, to make room

room for the arcade, as he perceived it would very indifferently have supplied their place on the present occasion. In different parts of the gardens were placed refreshments, iled up in pyramids and fantastic forms, and so interspersed with wreaths and lamps that they deceived the eye, changing their whimsical appearance at every step. Here a generous Armenian merchant unpacked his bales of Turkish handkerchiefs, and distributed them, with the royal heron plume, and vases of the rich ottar of the East, to the beauties that surrounded him, with a liberal hand. There a smart, witty Parisian guided the wheel of a lottery where there were none but prizes. Pedlars gave away their wares, and Punch and all his puppets entertained gratis.

At nine the representation began; and all the characters repaired to the theatre, in which seats were arranged sufficient to accommodate the numerous crowd. Lady

Mariamne and Sir Francis were unmaſked, as well as Ethelreda, who, having neither ſpirits nor time to prepare a ſplendid dreſs, was permitted by her Ladyſhip to appear as ſhe pleaſed. She, however quitted her mourning for the firſt time ſince her father's death. It had been prolonged ſix months by that of Mr. Carloville. She therefore ſimply dreſſed herſelf in a robe of muſlin, and placed upon her head a ſmall grey hat, full of white feathers. Her figure alone would have drawn upon her the obſervation of the company; but unmaſked, all eyes were fixed upon her; for never was beauty ſo ſtriking, which, joined to the timidity and penſiveneſs of her features, made her the object of univerſal admiration.

Amongſt the numbers that perſecuted her with compliments, De Clerac was eaſily diſcovered: nor was Caerleon deterred from ſaying a thouſand flattering things, by the cloſe attendance of a maſk whom

whom Ethelreda guessed to be Miss Beralston. In the crowd that followed her, two persons particularly engaged her attention: one seemed to watch her minutely in silence, whilst the other appeared waiting for an opportunity to speak to her alone. She thought the person of the latter bore some resemblance to that of Conway; and a latent hope that it might be he, prevented her from withdrawing, as she otherwise would have done, disgusted with the company, and fatigued with their mirth.

The opera, though admirably performed, did not engage her attention, or divert her thoughts one moment from the idea that had taken possession of her mind, that Conway was waiting to speak to her.

Her eyes were wandering in search of the mask that interested her curiosity, when a figure representing Merlin, followed by a tribe of Bards and Druids,

uttered a few lines, inviting the company to his cell. In a moment the harps of the Bards ſtruck up, and were anſwered by others from the receſſes of the grotto to which Merlin led; and the effect of the inſtruments, and voices that accompanied them, formed a kind of chorus that pleaſed as much for its ſuddenneſs as its novelty.

This invitation of the magician's was intended as the ſignal for a ſupper, which was laid in the grotto; and here, indeed, a ſcene preſented itſelf that almoſt left fairy tales behind. The grotto was ſpacious, and ſupported in different parts by rude pillars of rock; and ſeveral ſprings which had been diſcovered in cutting through the hill were formed into ſmall caſcades: though the cavern wound conſiderably, it was ſo judiciouſly managed by means of receſſes and columns, that all the company ſaw each other from end to end at once. At the ter-

mination

mination of the grotto, the open ſky appeared—the ſea in the diſtance, and the moon in all her luſtre.

De Clerac, ſeizing Ethelreda's hand, led her to a table, on which was placed, as on every other, a profuſion of all that was rare or ornamental; and in the middle of each, a kind of aviary, made of glittering wire, in which were tame Canary-birds and goldfinches! a device that appeared to give Sir Francis infinite pleaſure; inſomuch, that he could not forbear boaſting the invention.

"It occurred to me," ſaid he, "upon reading that paſſage in Taſſo deſcribing the birds in Armida's Iſland."

"Sir Francis is not quite correct in his quotation; nor do I ſee any connection between Taſſo's birds and theſe," ſaid Caerleon to Ethelreda; "for it does not appear to me that even *you* have animated them to ſing 'Io amo!' and you refuſe to hear it from any——No, not

not every one;" lowering his voice to a whiſper.

Ethelreda bluſhed, and caſt down her eyes with a look of confuſion; but made no anſwer.

"Specchi del cor fallaci, infidi lumi,
Ben riconnoſco in voi gli inganni voſtri:
Ma, che pro', ſe ſchivarli Amor mi toglie?"

ſaid a voice behind her. She inſtantly turned her head to ſee who had addreſſed her, whilſt a deeper bluſh coloured her cheek; but all around her were engaged in diſtinct converſations.

"Who is it that ſo elegantly taxes you with perfidy?" ſaid Caerleon, fixing his eyes on her as he threw his maſk aſide, as if to diſcover by the variation of her countenance the degree of credit the accuſation deſerved.

"I rather think," ſaid Ethelreda, heſitating—"it may *not* have been addreſſed to me——ſome other perhaps—"

"I know

"I know none near us who read Italian," ſaid Caerleon, negligently.

"No?—Miſs Beralſton does."

Lord Caerleon at that moment contrived to loſe himſelf amongſt the crowd of ſylphs, demons, fairies, druids, and magicians that attended the ſupper.

Catches, glees, and ſongs, in the firſt ſtyle of ſinging, by the opera performers, helped to prolong the pleaſures of the repaſt, and add, if poſſible, to the feſtivity of the reſplendent cavern.

Sir Francis had politely intimated, that the company was expected to unmaſk at ſupper, and every one complied accordingly. All was compliment and congratulation on the aſtoniſhing taſte and effect of the entertainment. All joined in praiſing its ſplendour, and in admiring its novelty. Sir Francis's profuſion, his magnificence, his talents for muſic, were dwelt upon by turns: nor did Sir Francis think ſome thouſands

badly

badly beſtowed, whilſt his gueſts concurred in declaring him the moſt princely hoſt that ever had entertained.

Ethelreda alone ſat ſilent and grave. She had ſearched in vain for Conway among the parties at ſupper; and, mortified and diſappointed, ſhe patiently liſtened to the rhapſodies of De Clerac, without uttering a ſingle word. Indeed her thoughts were partly engaged with the ſingularity of the Italian applied to her. She knew the voice was not Miſs Beralſton's, though ſhe tried to make Caerleon think it was; and ſhe could not miſtake their being addreſſed to her, for the voice was ſo low, and ſo near, that had not Caerleon been very near her he could not have heard it.

Sir Francis was not ſorry when the riſing of his gueſts from the ſupper-table gave him an opportunity of once more raiſing their aſtoniſhment. Merlin, advancing towards the middle of the grotto,

waved

waved his wand, and immediately an unperceived curtain fell, and discovered an arched stair-case of rough stone, most brilliantly illuminated; and the sound of fiddles, flutes, and oboes at a distance, invited dancing.

All prepared to ascend the stair-case, ready to behold some new wonder—Ethelreda among the rest, but without De Clerac, from whom she had escaped—when a tall magician tapped her on the shoulder, and said, "I am Conway!" The flight of stairs was not numerous; but they became so narrow that only one person could ascend at the same time. What then was the astonishment of the lady who ascended first, when a small door opened, and she found herself in a drawing-room, covered with gravel-walks, and full of statues and fountains, flowering shrubs, and vases, in which grew orange-trees, and myrtles in bloom!

Fortunately it was not Lady Mariamne.

The whole of the company had no ſooner aſcended than the door cloſed, the hanging dropped over it, and left no traces of an entrance. The company diſperſed through the rooms, and began to dance; in each of which there were ſpaces left free from gravel, for the purpoſe.

It was not till then that Lady Mariamne recovered from her ſurpriſe enough to ſpeak. At length ſhe exclaimed, " Sir Francis, where am I?—What have you done?—How came I here?—Which way did I come in?" cried ſhe, looking eagerly round the room. " Oh! for Heaven's ſake ſtop the dancers, or the houſe will fall into that odious grotto underneath! How could you *dare* to make it, when I forbade it abſolutely?—I ſhall die!—I ſhall be buried in the ruins!" cried ſhe, ſcreaming more from paſſion than fear; and then, as if determined to give a pleaſant finiſh to Sir

Francis's gala, ſhe fell into a well-counterfeited hyſteric fit.

The feſtival was immediately interrupted; the dancers flocked round the lady; the muſic ceaſed; and ſo great was the curioſity, not with any deſire to aſſiſt, but to ſee, that the company, preſſing violently one againſt the other, overturned ſome vaſes againſt an aſtoniſhingly fine mirror, placed on one ſide of the room to lengthen the perſpective. The rooms were only temporary ones of floor-cloth, for the occaſion. The violence of the blow piercing through, inſtantly demoliſhed one ſide of the apartment, and the amazed gueſts once more ſaw themſelves, as it were, in the gardens. The tumult and crack immediately recovered Lady Mariamne. The alarm was ſpread, that all the houſe was deſcending into the grotto; harlequins were thrown down, and trampled upon by heavy prieſts and fat friars. Kings,

ſultanas,

ſultanas, Spaniards, ſhepherdeſſes, and peaſants, all interrupted each other in their hurry to eſcape the wreck. Lady Mariamne now ſcreamed with *real* fear; Sir Francis raved, ſtamped, ſwore, entreated the terrified crowd to liſten to him. It was in vain to ſpeak; it was impoſſible to hear; the tumult was beyond deſcription, as the pleaſure had been. Not till all the world had retreated to the gardens, could Lady Mariamne get any one to attend to her; and then, partly from the fear of Sir Francis's diſpleaſure, which ſhe had reaſon to expect, and partly to gratify her own rage, ſhe ordered a chaiſe, with her own ſervants, and immediately quitted Kilgaren-hall; or, as the maſter of the houſe had now named it, Caſino Belvedere.

It was very ſoon generally known in the gardens that Lady Mariamne had left the houſe; and as the gueſts no longer

longer feared for their own safety, they thought it neceſſary to conſole Sir Francis.

But Sir Francis was inconſolable; not for the loſs of his coſtly mirror; not for the departure of his termagant lady; but for the total ſtop that had been put to the feſtival. Lord Trecaſtle tried in vain to pacify him, and to perſuade him to ſend after the fugitive. He obſtinately refuſed; and, exclaiming bitterly againſt her affected hyſterics, cried, "I never will, I never can forgive her! If ſhe had waited *but* till to-morrow, ſhe might have demoliſhed every thing! But that woman poſſeſſes the malice of a demon! She knew I had ſet my whole ſoul upon this entertainment; ſhe knew it wanted nothing but the charming collazione I had projected after the ball, to render it perfect; and ſhe was determined to circumvent me! For," continued he almoſt breathleſs, "the alarm is ſo univerſal, that half the company is already de-

parted,

parted, and the gardens will ſoon be empty!"

Whilſt he yet ſpoke, whole groups diſappeared; and the ſound of numerous carriages told him he had nothing to hope.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

> Now go with me,
> Into the chauntry by;
> And underneath that consecrated roof
> Plight me the full assurance of your faith,
> That my most jealous and too doubtful soul
> May henceforth live at peace.
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

ETHELREDA was still in the grotto. The wand of the magician had fixed her to the spot where she stood: all ascended the stone steps, and she remained in the illuminated cavern with Conway, lost in astonishment.

"Can you pardon me?" cried he, throwing aside his mask, his cap, and wand, and seizing Ethelreda's cold hand.

She made no answer.

"I am about to put you to the proof!" continued he, ſolemnly, and looking earneſtly at her. "Without heſitating, without evaſion, give me an abſolute right to this hand!"

She was about to ſpeak.

"Hear me!" ſaid Conway, impatiently, "for the ſake of mercy!——In three days I ſail—upon what ſervice I am ignorant; my abſence, I am perſuaded, will be a long one, and my deſtination is ſo ſecret, it is more than probable I ſhall never return!"

The hand that Conway held trembled violently, and became ſtill colder.

"I have taken every precaution," continued he, "provided you do not refuſe me this *laſt* requeſt, to have the ceremony performed, as ſecretly as you pleaſe, this very morning, at St. Siffrid's Church. It is now," looking at his watch, "near two!"

"It can never take place, Captain Conway!"

Conway!" said Ethelreda, ſpeaking for the firſt time.

"We part, then, for ever!" ſaid Conway, quitting her hand, and turning to go.

"Stop!" cried ſhe, "Stop one moment! You urge me, Captain Conway, to make a laſting engagement with you, without remembering the light in which I *muſt* have appeared to you at our laſt meeting. You compel me to enter your family, knowing the averſion of your father, though without knowing that he himſelf has intimated it to *me!* You know, too, that I am ſeparated from my ſiſter; that I have not a friend in the world whom I can conſult on an occaſion ſo important. Shall I ſay, too, that a reſolution ſo ſuddenly taken may not be permanent; that it alarms me? becauſe, when laſt we parted——"

"Oh, Ethelreda! *this* from you!— So *coolly* you can diſmiſs me!—You

have

have no friends to consult?—I would not *bear* to see you swayed by advice.—If your own heart does not plead for me, tell me so, and I relinquish you! I require no justification of your conduct, I will accept of none—but your consent. Tell me for the last time—Do we part for ever and ever?"

The question, and the manner of it, were too decisive not to call for an immediate answer. Ethelreda's pride and resolution both gave way, at the thoughts of seeing Conway depart for ever, loaded with grief and despondency. She hesitated, still without speaking.

Conway perceived her irresolution; and, once more seizing her hand, he exclaimed, in a doubtful kind of rapture, "You do consent! Let us go this moment——" and he attempted to lead her towards the door of the grotto.

"Oh, Conway!" said she, still lingering behind, "if you had heard your

 father's

father's conversation—if you had witnessed what I suffered, even when conscious dignity supported me under such humiliations, you would not urge me to sacrifice the right I still feel to return the scorn of your family, by submitting thus to enter it!"

"You will not, you cannot involve me! You *were* too just, too candid once, to punish me for my misfortunes!" said Conway passionately.

"If you felt the presages that I do, you would not wish to extort from me this fatal consent!" said Ethelreda, in the most melancholy tone.

"I *hoped* it would have been voluntary," said Conway, with extreme solemnity, "that, in quitting this country, I might have had a wish to return to it again, if such had been my fate; yet I feel that I can derive no comfort from your compliance if it make you unhappy. Once more, farewell! — My

hours are reckoned. This is the last I have to spend with you!"

"Oh, no! not by many! many!" exclaimed Ethelreda. "I consent to your proposals, as much for my own sake as for yours!"—quite overcome by the despondency of Conway's manner.

"Then let us not lose a moment!" eagerly uttered Conway: "another day I *cannot* dispose of, though my life depended on it!"—fearful least she should again waver in her resolution so hastily taken.

"Not unconditionally," resumed Ethelreda. "Remember, we part the moment the ceremony is performed; and if the time should be lengthened before you sail, I forbid *any* attempt to see me in the interim."

Ethelreda's manner was as decisive as Conway's had been; he saw it was in vain to alter her determination; he therefore thankfully subscribed to her terms.

terms. "You will allow me to write to you?" said he.

"Not whilst you remain in England; since I would not for the universe raise a suspicion of our connection."

All Conway's objections to this last arrangement were fruitless; and observing he only lost time in his persuasions, he gave up the point.

They walked hastily through the motley crew that spread over the gardens, without suffering the tumult, which did not escape their notice, to interest their curiosity, or to delay them one single moment: a chaise waited for them, into which Conway lifted Ethelreda, whose apprehensions had deprived her of all strength. They drove furiously; outstripping most of the carriages on the road; which, from that circumstance, and the flambeaux and moons that accompanied them, looked more like the populous street of a city.

The old vicar of the village of St. Siffrid, and domeſtic chaplain at the Caſtle, for more than twelve months had been incapable of performing his parochial functions. And the Strathener chaplain, who was ſure to poſſeſs the living, in the gift of Sir Francis L'Eſterling, after the death of the preſent incumbent, officiated for him. The Rev. Mr. Morgan had been applied to by Conway to read the marriage ſervice; but as he was one of thoſe men who are ſubject to the influence of bribes, he was obliged to engage him in his intereſt by depoſiting a ſum the ſtraitened ſtate of his finances could ill ſpare; the avarice of his father effectually preventing Conway from ever being over-ſtocked with money; which, joined to the profuſeneſs of his own diſpoſition, ſometimes involved him in difficulties.

It was near five o'clock when the chaiſe approached St. Siffrid's Caſtle; and

and Conway now recollected, for the first time, he had provided no witnesses. Trembling with apprehension, lest she should avail herself of his omission, and his inability to procure any, Conway mentioned the circumstance to Ethelreda, entreating her at the same time not to recall her consent.

"You do not imagine, I hope, sir," said she with some indignation, "that I have so little steadiness, *now* to recede, by taking an advantage of your oversight? Oh, Captain Conway!" said she, observing he was distressed at her manner, "why should I hesitate to confess, that, were we otherwise circumstanced, this union would give me inexpressible happiness? But you are supplicating for a bride who has nothing but herself to bestow; who by her compliance brings upon you the displeasure of your family; without fortune, even without the consequence that the name of L'Esterling

would have given her; and but lately released from the bonds of an unfortunate marriage."

"Tell me not of myself!" said Conway impatiently. "What have I to offer in return for the treasure I am soliciting? You only remind me of my own unworthiness; and that I have no claims to your favour, but the sincerity and fervour with which I entreat for it. Even my profession," continued he, "affords me no prospect of independence, till I am too old to value it."

"I myself," said Ethelreda, who read his suspicions and reproaches in his countenance, "I will procure witnesses, whose fidelity I can rely upon!" Conway had no time to express his thanks, before the chaise stopped; it was settled he should meet Ethelreda at a little door in the Castle gardens, nearly opposite the Church. For, though Conway procured a special licence, the impossibility of his

retreating unobserved from the Castle, amidst the number of guests that were expected there, made it absolutely necessary to perform the ceremony in the Church.

It was Llewellyn who opened the door of the carriage for Ethelreda; and as she walked into the hall, he told her that Captain Conway had been there the preceding day; and then gave her a letter, which she put into her pocket without looking at it. It was still dark, and Ethelreda followed Llewellyn, who walked before her with a light, till she came to the stairs. She stopped, and said, "Llewellyn, is your wife still up?"

"She waited up for you, madam, and the company," said Llewellyn; alluding to Sir Francis's guests.

"Call her instantly;" said she, dreading some of them would arrive. Llewellyn did as he was ordered.

"Llewellyn, and you, Winifred," said

 Ethelreda,

Ethelreda, "you were faithful ſervants of my father—can I depend upon your fidelity to me, his daughter?" The queſtion, which half implied a doubt, brought tears into the eyes of each.

"I aſk no promiſes," ſaid Ethelreda —"a Welchman keeps his word without them!" Llewellyn ſmiled. "Go on, Llewellyn, to the little poſtern in the myrtle garden—you have the keys?"

"I muſt get a lanthorn then," ſaid Llewellyn, "for it is ſtill dark; and within the laſt half-hour it has come on to rain and blow."

It did indeed blow violently; and Ethelreda, as ſhe deſcended the ſteps of the terraces, was obliged to hold by Winifred, to keep her footing, as ſhe trembling followed the light of Llewellyn's lanthorn. At the gate waited Conway.

"What a terrible morning is this for you to be out!" ſaid he, "and without

a cloak, too! Your gown is quite wet! you will take cold!—I ſhall kill you!—Take my coat!" cried he with all the vehemence and gallantry of his diſpoſition; and at the ſame time preparing to take it off.

"And what are you to do without one?" ſaid Ethelreda, ſmiling at his want of conſideration. "Fear nothing for me—my health is ſtronger than my mind. Perhaps you have forgotten that I am uſed to ſuch adventures? You do not recollect that terrible cave?"

It was but to croſs a ſmall church-yard, from the Caſtle gardens to the Church porch; and whilſt they were yet ſpeaking, Ethelreda found herſelf almoſt at the altar. She trembled, and wiſhed to recede; but ſhe had too much preſence of mind to irritate Conway by an appearance of regret. She walked ſteadily up the ſteps of the chancel, to the communion-table; Mr. Morgan waited

waited for them; he took out his book, and, by the dim light of a candle, read with haste, stammering, and hesitation, the solemn service of marriage.

It was not till Conway attempted to put the ring on her finger, that Ethelreda perceived that of her first marriage: she took it off hastily, and placed it on the rail of the communion-table; and this little circumstance served to complete the disorder of her spirits, and add to her depression. She looked round the Church with horror; by turns fixing her eyes on the marble effigy of her father, and on the two servants, who still wore his mourning. Never did a marriage wear so much the air of a funeral. No joy, no congratulation; darkness and silence, only interrupted by the beating rain and howling of the wind, were the gloomy attendants on this melancholy ceremony. All Ethelreda's hopes sunk under such inauspicious

 omens.

omens. In vain Conway tried to re-assure her drooping spirits. She repeated incessantly, as they descended the steps, that "she had destroyed his future prospects, and had involved him in her own unrelenting destiny."

At the little postern they parted. Conway drew his hat over his eyes as he quitted Ethelreda's hand: he walked on some paces with his eyes fixed on the ground. The locking of the Church door, as he passed it, made him raise them. He perceived that he had been watched—The grey dawn clearly shewed him the person of a man, but not his features; the form, however, hastily retreated, as Conway advanced, and was presently lost to his sight, in the wood by the side of the Church-yard. Conway rejoiced this unpleasant occurrence was unknown to Ethelreda; in thinking of whom, he stepped into the chaise which

waited

waited for him, and with incredible expedition returned to London.

When Ethelreda ſaw Conway depart, a fooliſh foreboding that their ill-omened union would prove unfortunate, and a kind of perſuaſion they ſhould never meet again, made her ſo faint and weak, joined to the fatigue of the preceding evening and night, together with the poor ſtate of her health, that it was with extreme difficulty the two ſervants ſupported her up the ſteps of the garden, as far as the little tower that defended the entrance into the great hall. Here the ſound of voices deterred her from proceeding, and ſhe ſtood ſhivering in the air, and quite wetted with rain, in hopes they would depart. She liſtened attentively, and plainly diſcovered, from the ſtrange voices, that her allotment of Sir Francis's viſitors were arrived. Amongſt them, by his foreign accent, ſhe

ſhe plainly heard De Clerac giving orders to the Caſtle ſervants in broken Engliſh, and ſwearing in French that his own valet had taken the road to Strathener Caſtle, whilſt he, by miſtake, had accompanied ſome ſtrangers to St. Siffrid's.

In vain Ethelreda waited for them to leave the hall. Some declared they would not go to bed; ſome abuſed the bad weather, which prevented them from going ſhooting, as they intended; and all talked of Lady Marianne, whoſe bad temper they reprobated; whilſt others laughed at the expenſive folly of Sir Francis, and ridiculed the gala, that had given them ſo much entertainment.

Llewellyn and Winifred both urged her to go in; but there was no other entrance to the Caſtle from the gardens; and whilſt ſhe ſtood debating whether ſhe ſhould wait their removal, or walk through the hall undiſmayed, ſhe heard

De

De Clerac say, "He would once more look at the weather, and then go to bed." He came towards the tower, as the nearest door, and saw her instantly.

"Ha, ha! la belle matinée pour une promenade!" cried he; "Il y faut de mystère là-dessous!" and he laughed violently, as he followed Ethelreda into the hall, who made him no answer.

The group was indeed a whimsical one, before the Count joined it; old Llewellyn with his lanthorn; Winifred, with a scarlet cloth mantle thrown over her shoulders; and Ethelreda's feathers quite wetted, and falling on different sides over the edge of her hat. The Count followed them, glittering in the habit of Atar in the French opera, repeating, with many gestures,

"Mon Irza, plus fraiche que la rose, &c."

Notwithstanding Ethelreda's perturbation, the smile of astonishment on the faces

faces of her guests did not escape her. At any other time she could have joined in their mirth; but now her thoughts were too entirely taken up with Conway. It was with extreme difficulty she walked through them unsupported; saying, as she quitted the hall, with an inclination of the head, "Llewellyn, shew the gentlemen their apartments."

Ethelreda's appearance had given a new turn to their conversation, and they only separated to prepare for breakfast.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Poor is the love, that rather than give up
A little pride, a little formal pride,
The breath of vanity, can bear to see
The man whose heart was once so dear to thine
By many a tender vow so mix'd together,
A prey to anguish, fury, and distraction!

THOMSON.

IT was not to rest, that Ethelreda was impatient to reach her own room. It was to think of Conway, and to revolve in her mind every thing that had passed within the last few hours. Only to blame herself, she recapitulated all Conway's arguments; and, thus disposed to find fault with her own conduct, she found them weak and unconvincing; the ebullitions of passion, not the suggestions of reason. And the compassion

that

that had influenced her to comply with his proposal, in the severity of condemning herself, she called selfishness and imbecility. But more than all she was perplexed in what way or in what words to convey the knowledge of her new engagement to her sister and Mr. Harwood. All her but half-subdued pride returned at the mortifying idea, a clandestine marriage!—and clandestine *only* because the father of her husband had forbidden the connection! Ethelreda blushed for herself, and for the degraded name of L'Esterling; she blushed for Conway, who could humiliate the woman he professed to love!—"Yes, whom he *professed* to love!" said she, speaking aloud, without intending it. Ethelreda forgot for a moment, that in hazarding every thing Conway had gone farther than professions; but if Ethelreda had a foible, she inherited it from her father—it was the pride of family.

It was this foible, joined to her misfortunes, that sometimes made Ethelreda tenacious of respect, and misconstrue ignorance or omission into affronts, that were not intended as such. If Ethelreda blamed Conway for a moment, she as speedily owned her injustice; and the momentary displeasure she felt against him made it recoil with additional reproaches on herself. "It is I alone," said she, "that have acted unworthily!—when I suffered his entreaties, and those of my own heart, to prevail, contrary to his interests, contrary to the suggestions of my own dignity, and regardless of the honour of my hitherto unblemished name." Ethelreda felt at that time as if the spirit of her ancestors had deserted her; she saw herself, with all the romantic pride of her father, or rather she fancied herself, the first degenerate branch of the name of L'Esterling. She looked back retrospectively for all the centuries her family

family had existed; not one had tarnished its glory by a mean or an unworthy action: at least so it appeared to Ethelreda; for her father had often proudly boasted of the unsullied honour of his ancestors. She blushed deeply when she beheld herself the first who had thrown a shade upon them; and so deep was her vexation, that it produced tears.

It was long before her passion and pride suffered her to grow calm; and then the remembrance of Conway returned, and with it the recollection of the letter Llewellyn had given her. It was not because it came from Conway she opened it—she had no idea it was from him; it was merely to take off her thoughts from the subject that harassed her; it was from distraction, partly, and partly from restlessness.

She began to read it, however; and without turning to the signature, she knew it to be from Conway, who, actuated

tuated by his paſſion, began, without any preamble, the ſubject that occupied all his thoughts. He aſked no pardon for his abruptneſs; he required no juſtification of that cruel ſcene which had driven him almoſt to deſperation. He ſimply related the circumſtances that had taken him ſo haſtily from Strathener; and then, in terms ſo humble, entreated her forgiveneſs of the propoſals he was about to make, that whilſt ſhe read them Ethelreda ceaſed to repent her lamented compliance. "Pardon my temerity," ſaid Conway; "I feel ſenſibly that my propoſals degrade you and mortify me; but do not imagine I wiſh you to accede to my terms; it is I who am determined to agree to yours. If your dignity revolts againſt a private union, and I know it will, I entreat, I ſupplicate you, to accept me openly. There is nothing I would not forego to obtain you. There is no hazard to

which

which I would not *thankfully* expose *myself* to spare you the slightest mortification."

Such a declaration was sufficient to work upon the sensible heart of Ethelreda, and she became more reconciled to the step she had taken; though she still called her condescension blameable, because it was more inimical to Conway's interests than to her own. Perhaps she was more composed, because she had taken the resolution to keep their marriage a secret even from her sister; and when some fortunate revolution in their affairs enabled them publicly to avow their engagements, she thought to deceive the world by repeating the forms publicly. With such sophistic reasoning Ethelreda imposed on her own understanding, and at breakfast she met her guests with tolerable serenity.

For several days longer than they intended, the whole company was obliged

to remain in the Castle, owing to the badness of the weather, and the overflowing of a little river, that had laid part of the road under water. Ethelreda at first lamented that the elements had conspired with her destiny to torment her. But she provided the gentlemen with cards, dice, and chess-tables; to the ladies she distributed music, and drawing-implements; and entertained them with her conversation as well as she could; and considering she scarcely knew the names of some, she succeeded tolerably, both in amusing them and in diverting herself. In short, she was *almost* sorry when they departed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Diis carus ipsis: quippe ter & quater
Anno revisens æquor Atlanticum
Impune—— HORAT. lib. 1, ode xxxi.

THOUGH Conway returned to London much happier than he left it, he was still not happy; but he was more at ease; he was satisfied of Ethelreda's truth; he had no longer any fears of losing her. But still, the uncertainty that hung over his fate depressed his spirits; and the idea, that in whatever misfortunes were reserved for him she was involved, prevented him from recovering his natural cheerfulness.

The limited number of days were more than expired, and still his stay was prolonged; and he waited in anxiety the

mandate that was to ſeparate him from Ethelreda, perhaps for years—perhaps for ever! Another week paſſed away: Conway was a thouſand times on the point of infringing the treaty, by writing to Ethelreda: but he feared incurring her diſpleaſure; and particularly he wiſhed to avoid any appearance of having impoſed on her by a falſe ſtatement of the time of his departure; of which his repeated delays made him dread more and more the imputation.

Mr. Conway had been in town above three weeks, without having met his ſon, or without knowing how he had diſpoſed of himſelf; or, indeed, without knowing Captain Conway's deſtination was ſo materially changed. This circumſtance, apparently ſo extraordinary, is, however, eaſily accounted for. When the family was not in town, Conway always went to lodgings, wherever it beſt ſuited his convenience; and the wide difference in

their

their purſuits ſeldom procured them any accidental meetings. Mr. Conway was at his own houſe, in Portman Square, where Captain Conway had not once been ſince he quitted Strathener Caſtle; and Mr. Conway, totally unappriſed and unſuſpicious of his ſon's abode in London, had written repeatedly to Portſmouth; imagining, as Conway's frigate lay at Spithead, he was there waiting ſailing-orders. It was merely by chance they met at laſt; for, as Mr. Conway was going through Pall-mall, ruminating on his own projects and his ſon's ſilence, his cogitations were interrupted by the ſhutting of a door, out of which Conway had juſt iſſued. "Captain Conway!" cried he. Conway turned inſtantly."

"If you have no engagements for this morning that will interfere, I ſhould be glad, ſir, of an hour's converſation with you."

"Any engagement of mine, ſir, ſhall

give place to you," said Conway, who, following the example of his father's over-acted politeness, was determined not to be behind hand with him in compliments. Conway knew that when *he* was calm, his father always lost his temper. From his countenance and manner he augured badly; he therefore armed himself with civility and good-manners; and, after a few more ceremonious apologies from Mr. Conway, *as* ceremoniously returned by his son, they retired to Conway's lodgings.

Mr. Conway knew not exactly how to begin; at last he said: "You are *still* in town, Captain Conway!"

"I am, sir."

"And when do you sail, sir?"

"That is a question I cannot answer; I was going to the Admiralty when I had the pleasure of meeting you."

"Don't call it *pleasure*, sir! You look disappointed, and angry."

"You

"You miſtake me entirely, ſir," ſaid Conway, ſtill perfectly calm. "This meeting ſpares me the trouble of writing to you; my attendance here has forbidden all thoughts of a journey to Strathener; I am ordered to join a ſquadron upon ſecret ſervice. I intended writing to my mother," continued he, "that I might ſee her before my departure for Portſmouth, if in the mean time I do not receive poſitive orders to go on board."

"For *Channel* ſervice, you *mean*, ſir! Why, Conway, do you think to impoſe on *me*? Do you imagine I cannot ſee through *any* artifice of yours? You are now this moment projecting a viſit to St. Siffrid's Caſtle!"

"You are miſleading yourſelf ſtrangely, ſir!" ſaid Conway. "I thought," continued he, "that you knew me ſuperior to artifice; I am *not* going to St. Siffrid's. Why ſhould I?"

The queſtion was admirably well-timed; for Mr. Conway had no anſwer ready. "Why," ſaid he, heſitating—"I thought—I imagined—I concluded you had broken with—Mrs. Carloville. Indeed, ſhe herſelf diſclaims any intereſt or any concern with you."

Mr. Conway was perplexed. It was the firſt time he had ever mentioned Mrs. Carloville to his ſon; and had done exactly what he wiſhed to have avoided! It was too late to retract—he was ſilent.—He took two or three turns acroſs the room, whilſt Conway muſed upon his father's ſpeech; and it appeared to him, for the firſt time, he had advanced more than he could prove. He looked at his father two or three times; and an unpleaſant ſenſation he did not wiſh to define, kept him ſilent.

"What is this you have been telling me about ſailing-orders, Conway?" ſaid Mr. Conway, at laſt.

"I have

"I have been ſaying, ſir, what you unfortunately do not chooſe to believe: that my deſtined ſervice in the Channel is exchanged for ſome other—I know not what—" ſaid Conway patiently.

"It is very unaccountable!—very ſingular!—very ſtrange!——Nothing can be more remote—more oppoſite to my intentions—When I ſolicited——" He was going on to make diſcoveries, when he recollected himſelf: "I believe I have ſufficient intereſt to procure you ſome other ſervice, Conway, provided you will promiſe to comply with ſomething I have to requeſt of you?"

"It is quite equal to me," replied Conway: "and I had rather you gave yourſelf no trouble on that ſcore."

"But it is not equal to *me*, ſir!" cried Mr. Conway, enraged at his coolneſs and indifference. "Anſwer me plainly—Will you comply—or will you not?—I demand a categorical anſwer."

"You must first propose your terms, sir," calmly answered Conway.

"You know well enough what they are!" cried his father, still more exasperated.

"If they relate to Lady Octavia Conway, I have long *decided*: the conduct of the Lady herself evinces it plainly."

"You are deviating from the truth, sir! Her conduct evinces nothing—she is under no engagements to the Count de Clerac-Auxerre!" said Mr. Conway, concluding his son alluded to him.

"I know nothing of Lady Octavia's engagements," said Conway: "whatever they are, they will never interfere with mine."

"If you hope any thing from Mrs. Carloville, you are deceived: she disowns all preference for you; she disclaims all interest in your proceedings: and other preferences——other engagements——" Mr. Conway stopped: he felt he had gone

gone too far; and that he had entirely perverted the ſenſe of what Ethelreda had ſaid in her converſation with him.

"You are perfectly right to ſtop there, ſir," ſaid Conway, rather irritated at what he knew to be a downright falſehood: "you have already ſaid more than you can anſwer, I believe!"

Had not Mr. Conway been conſcious he prevaricated, ſuch a ſpeech from his ſon would have drawn on him his laſting diſpleaſure; but he was ſenſible of his own deviation from truth, and inwardly acknowledged his ſon's ſuperiority. "I will give you a day or two to conſider of my terms, ſir," ſaid he, going towards the door.

"In the mean time I ſhall be half way on the other ſide of the globe, perhaps!" ſaid Conway.

"And perhaps not," ſaid his father, as he ſhut the room-door after him, leaving Conway in exactly the ſame diſ-

poſition as when he entered; namely, inclined to think of nothing but Ethelreda.

Many days elapſed, and Conway heard nothing from his father—neither on the ſubject of his departure. Days at laſt amounted to weeks; and nearly a month was completed, which Conway paſſed in the moſt irritating ſtate of uncertainty.

CHAP. XXV.

Oh world, how apt the poor are to be proud!

SHAKESPEARE.

IT was paſt the equinox, and the bad weather that uſually accompanies the ſun's paſſing the line, filled Ethelreda with dread and apprehenſions. It was October, and yet the violent ſtorms of wind, rain, and thunder had not abated. Such tempeſtuous weather forbade all intercourſe in the neighbourhood. The roads, torn and deſtroyed by the rain, looked the beds of torrents, and were totally unſafe for carriages. Ethelreda was entirely prevented walking; her own talents were her only reſources; and from a conſtant repetition of the ſame exerciſes, thoſe at laſt grew tireſome, becauſe the

the mind was not engaged in them. Ethelreda, ſick of her ſolitude, repined inceſſantly at the bad weather, and trembled at every guſt of wind, which diſturbed her terrified imagination with dreams of death, and ſhipwrecks, and Conway. Her troubles had lately been much increaſed by the contradictory letters ſhe received from Harwood; for her ſiſter wrote to her but ſeldom. Sometimes he would give her reaſon to hope her ſiſter's health was mending hourly:—the next poſt would bring an account of ſymptoms that foreboded a rapid diſſolution. In fact, Harwood's ſpirits exhilarated by his hopes, or depreſſed by his apprehenſions, he wrote accordingly, without conſidering how ſeriouſly he alarmed Ethelreda.

With tranſport Ethelreda at laſt ſaw ſome probability of the weather changing. The ſun ſhone dim and watry through the clouds; yet ſhe ordered her horſe, and determined to pay Mrs. Conway a

viſit

visit at Strathener; which the violent rains had long prevented her from doing. As she approached the Castle, the first object that struck her was the north tower divested of its flag. She turned, quite overwhelmed with disappointment; but she had been seen from the Castle, and one of the servants ran out to know her commands. Ethelreda wanted not to ask any questions; but the servant approached, and waited for her to speak.

"When did your lord's family depart?" said she.

"His lordship, and my Lord Caerleon, with Lady Octavia, and Miss Beralston, set off this morning, madam."

"And Mrs. Conway?"

"Mrs. Conway, madam, has been gone these three weeks."

"Alone?"

"Yes, madam, alone."

Ethelreda was very sorry, and much surprised, at the precipitate departure of

the Strathener family: not that ſhe cared for any of *them*; but ſhe hoped to have had the pleaſure of Mrs. Conway's company at intervals, till ſhe received Mr. Harwood's ſummons to meet her ſiſter in London; and beſides, too, ſhe had long been trying to procure herſelf a private converſation with Miſs Beralſton, who latterly had evidently ſhunned her. She was mortified too at the manner, in regard to her, in which the whole ſet had left the country; none of whom ſhe pardoned but Mrs. Conway, whom ſhe knew too ſincere in her attachment, and too elegantly polite in her manners, to treat any one with ſtudied neglect—laſt of all herſelf.

Two formal cards, from Lady Octavia and Miſs Beralſton, were put into Ethelreda's hand when ſhe returned to St. Siffrid's. Both lamented, in exactly the ſame terms, that the ſtate of the roads obliged them to take their leave by

meſſage

meſſage rather than in perſon; and both hoped to have the pleaſure of meeting Mrs. Carloville in London. Ethelreda threw them on a table haſtily: ſhe was vexed to ſee that Miſs Beralſton ſo cloſely copied the diſagreeable example of Lady Octavia. And not till then did ſhe perceive a large parcel directed to her, and ſealed with black. For ſome moments ſhe did not venture to look at the impreſſion: at laſt, trembling with apprehenſion, ſhe examined the arms: they were neither Harwood's nor Conway's. She was relieved, but very much bewildered: *without* the coronet and ſupporters, the eſcutcheon was not unknown to her: ſhe broke it precipitately.

The envelope contained a letter, and the copy of a will.

"It is a legacy!" exclaimed Ethelreda. For further information, ſhe applied to the letter. It was ſigned "Carloville."

She

She turned to the will. The will was ſigned " Carloville."

Ethelreda had now no fears for Conway or her ſiſter; ſhe perceived it concerned only herſelf, and all her terrors ſubſided into calmneſs; but her aſtoniſhment remained in full force, or rather increaſed, on reading the letter. It ran thus; " That though Mr. Carloville had in his lifetime forfeited every claim or hope of any part of the fortune of the late Lord Carloville, but ſuch of the eſtates as were unalienable from the title (both of which had devolved to the brother of the deceaſed, the ſecond ſon of the late lord, and the writer of the letter); and though the terms on which the late Mr. Carloville ſtood with his family were ſuppoſed to be univerſally known; yet the deceaſed Lord Carloville, who only waited to receive ſome intimation of the relationſhip from his daughter-in-law's family,

mily, to acknowledge the connection
uring his life, had waved this neglect in
is will, and had bequeathed her (not as
e widow of his son, whom he disowned,
ut as connected with his family) twenty
housand pounds, and his house and fur-
iture in Grosvenor-Square, for ever."
he letter referred her to a copy of the
ill, in a codicil to which the bequest
as mentioned; and at the house in
Grosvenor-Square she was appointed to
eceive the legacy the first week in De-
ember, from Lord Carloville's agent.
The letter concluded formally and re-
pectfully, and was signed by Lord Car-
oville, though manifestly written by an
gent, or an attorney.

There was a want of kindness in this
ast circumstance, that did not escape
he tenacious spirit of Ethelreda. "What
kind of opinion is it they have formed
of me?" said she, apostrophising herself
aloud

aloud with indignation. "This could never have been meant as a kindness; there is something too offensive in the manner!—They charge me too with never having made myself known to them!—Either I have been strangely deceived, or they have treated me with the most pointed neglect!" The first impulse, that actuated her to refuse this legacy, prompted her to write to Lord Carloville; but upon maturer consideration she determined to transact every thing with his lordship's agent; and by that means avoid all present or future discussion with any of the name of Carloville. In a few days her presence would be necessary in London, to fulfil the appointment. Accordingly, every arrangement was made for her departure, when she received a most alarming letter from Harwood: he entreated her to follow him immediately to Falmouth, with his

children,

hildren, and their servants; to lose no ime in preparations; adding, he was oing with Mrs. Harwood to Lisbon.

The summons perplexed Ethelreda; or she knew not how to obey it immediately; she thought it impossible to put ff her own business in town: she therefore departed from St. Siffrid's Castle on the 27th of October, in order to be s early as possible in London, accompanied by the children and their suite; eaving Llewellyn and his wife to superintend the domestic affairs of the Castle he very short time longer they were to remain there. In the hurry and confusion n which Ethelreda read this letter, she lmost overlooked a postscript, in which Harwood informed her he had given up the Castle to Sir Francis L'Esterling, who would have it in his power to appoint a new tenant by the 25th of December. To the care of Llewellyn and his wife he committed the charge of removing

whatever

whatever belonged to his family on the premises; requesting Ethelreda to discharge all the servants that had been hired since the death of Sir Roger. For the others, he assigned them the same posts in his own establishment at Harwood-hall, whither they were ordered to precede the arrival of Llewellyn and Winifred.

For the first time in her life, Ethelreda quitted Wales; and on the first of December arrived in London. Her journey, on account of the children, and the danger of crossing the Severn, had been uncommonly tedious.

Before Ethelreda reached London, it was almost dark; when she recollected that no house or lodging was provided for the reception of herself and the children; for it was by no means her intention to take possession, though but for a day, of that of the late Lord Carlsville. Totally ignorant of the ways of

London;

London; timid, and averſe to going to a hotel; unprotected but by ſervants; and without a proper recommendation; in this dilemma, when the poſtillions aſked whither they were to drive, Ethelreda made no anſwer, for, in effect, ſhe knew not what to ſay. She heſitated a few moments: at laſt, "Drive to Sir Francis L'Eſterling's, in Upper Harley-ſtreet," ſaid ſhe: and ſhe had no ſooner given the order, than ſhe repented it; as ſhe had originally intended to make her viſit to town a ſecret. She ſtopped at the door, however, and ſaw it ſurrounded by chairs and carriages. Ethelreda, in the mean time, had reſolved not to accept of accommodations in the houſe, were they to offer them; but merely to aſk a recommendation to a lodging.

A ſervant approached the chaiſe—"Is your lady at home?" aſked Ethelreda. The man had been lately hired; he ſtared, but made no anſwer. "Is your *lady* at home?"

home?" ſhe repeated. Another ſervant anſwered her, "My maſter and her ladyſhip have ſeparate houſes, Madam;" and walked away. "It is true," ſaid ſhe, recollecting the night of the gala: "Tell Sir Francis I ſhould be glad to ſpeak to him for a moment."

At that inſtant Lord Caerleon ſtepped out of a vis-à-vis at the door. He knew Mrs. Carloville's voice. He ſprang towards the carriage, and ſeizing her hand, in which ſhe held a card for the ſervant to take her name, exclaimed aloud that he was rejoiced to ſee her. Ethelreda ſtruggled to releaſe her hand. "Nay," ſaid Caerleon, "not unleſs you tell me whither you are going." The ſervant ſtill waited for her name.—"I will deliver your meſſage to my maſter, madam; am I to take your direction?" "No, no," ſaid Ethelreda, ſtill trying to withdraw her hand; "tell him, I wiſh to ſpeak to him now, directly."

"Your

"Your name, madam?"

"Tell Sir Francis, a relation wishes to ſpeak to him."

Ethelreda felt a kind of repugnance to calling herſelf Carloville; but obſerving, with the kind of inſolence that ſometimes belongs to the ſervants in great houſes, he did not chooſe to give her meſſage without her name: "Say, it is Mrs. Carloville."

"Go, ſir, inſtantly!" ſaid Caerleon, in his voice of authority, at the ſame time giving him the card from her hand. "But not this inſtant, either; for then *you* will be gone," addreſſing Mrs. Carloville.

As the man ſtepped into the hall, Ethelreda heard him laugh aloud. She was ſhocked and mortified beyond meaſure. He returned with a pretended excuſe from Sir Francis, that he was juſt ſitting down to dinner; concluding, perhaps, that Lord Caerleon had meant to give him ſome ſuch hint.

"I meet with nothing but insults!" said Ethelreda in despair. She thought herself abandoned and deserted by all on whom she had any claims. Caerleon still held her hand, of which she was unconscious, whilst she revolved in her mind how to determine. She knew no alternative, and with an aching heart told the postillions to drive to Grosvenor-square. When the chaise moved, Ethelreda perceived Caerleon had continued to hold her hand: she was silent, however; for he had already terrified and exposed her. What then were her feelings, joined to the agitation of her spirits, when, turning her head to see if the children followed her into the drawing-room, she perceived Lord Caerleon so near her that he entered the room at the same moment!

Ethelreda, too much overpowered by her sensations to speak or to object to Lord Caerleon's entrance, dropped upon a sopha,

a ſopha, unable to ſupport herſelf, and burſt into tears. Lord Caerleon at that moment entirely forgot his engagements with Miſs Beralſtone. His attachment to Mrs. Carloville, though, like his other attachments, ſubject to numberleſs changes, was in effect the only trait in his character that was not affected. To this ſentiment Lord Caerleon owed the correction of a thouſand fopperies, which he perceived were deſpiſed by Ethelreda; and it was from her unintentional influence that Caerleon was become almoſt a reaſonable being.

He was affected at ſight of her tears, yet was too ſelfiſh to leave her, though he plainly perceived it was his intruſion that occaſioned them: he threw himſelf on his knees, and, ſeizing both Ethelreda's hands, entreated her to pardon him. "And yet," cried he, with a tone and countenance of mortified vanity, "in Conway it is no crime to follow

you, to love you, and even to tell you so!"

Such an exclamation was not calculated to relieve Ethelreda's distress, but rather to increase it. She made him no answer. He continued kneeling at her feet; and he might have kneeled for ever, but the sound of a voice speaking to the servants, and the sudden apparition of Conway, petrified yet roused her. She rose instantly, and, disengaging herself from Caerleon, sprung towards Conway. Expeditious as she was, Conway was already out of her reach. He called to Lord Caerleon to follow him, and retreated instantly.

Joined to the astonishment that distracted Ethelreda at the sight of Conway so unexpectedly, at a moment when, from his long silence, she believed him existing in another hemisphere; the idea of his meeting Caerleon was too terrible. Caerleon, determined to clear her, followed

him rapidly: Ethelreda tried to ſtop him; but ſtrength and utterance both failed her, and ſhe fell ſenſeleſs at the door.

To the ſervants who were aſſiſting in carrying in the baggage, the whole was a myſtery. Her own maid, who had formerly lived in town with Lady Octavia, in terror and confuſion fled acroſs the ſquare to Lord Trecaſtle's houſe, not knowing what ſhe did, or that ſhe could be of any ſervice. The door was open; and in the hall ſhe interrupted the progreſs of Lady Octavia, who, magnificently dreſſed, was juſt going out. "My miſtreſs is dying!—" cried the woman out of breath.

"Well! Who?" ſaid Lady Octavia ſharply.

"Mrs. Carloville."

"Mrs. Carloville dying! Where? Not in London?"

"Acroſs the ſquare, at Lord Carloville's houſe, my lady."

"At Lord Carloville's houſe! How ſtrange!" ſaid Lady Octavia. "Send Griffiths," ſaid ſhe to one of the ſervants, as ſhe ſtepped into the carriage.

Mrs. Carloville's maid, who thought any aſſiſtance acceptable, thankfully returned with the houſe-keeper. Ethelreda in the mean time had been removed by the ſervants into the drawing-room. She breathed, but had not yet opened her eyes or ſpoken. Mrs. Griffiths, who prided herſelf on her knowledge of phyſic, which ſhe practiſed at Strathener, declared ſhe could not recover, and very good-naturedly waited the whole night in expectation of ſeeing her go off. Lady Octavia went to her ſiſter's to meet a very large party, where ſhe failed not telling Lady Mariamne that Mrs. Carloville was dying.

The ſame day that Ethelreda arrived in London, Captain Conway received a note from his father, intimating he

ſhould

ſhould be glad to ſee him in Portman-ſquare. Conway had ſeen his mother ſeveral times ſince her arrival in town, and Mr. Conway accidentally; but nothing like converſation had paſſed between them ſince their laſt interview at Conway's lodgings.

Captain Conway never doubted but it was his father's influence that had ſo long detained him in London; he concluded too that this day his father intended to aſk for an anſwer, or rather expected a full acceſſion to his terms.

He went therefore in expectation of quarrelling with him; for with regard to Octavia he had neither the power nor the inclination to ſubmit to his will: but, if it were poſſible, he wiſhed to avoid an open rupture; and accordingly he made a thouſand good reſolutions not to ſuffer his turbulent ſpirit to get the better of his temper, how great ſoever might be the provocation.

Mr. Conway received him with ſmiles.

"You do not intend to diſoblige me, Conway, I am certain," ſaid he: "I have a better opinion of your underſtanding."

"Perhaps you have over-rated it then," ſaid Conway, "at leaſt according to your own ſtandard."

"I hope not, ſir." They were both ſilent ſome minutes. "I am waiting for your anſwer, Captain Conway."

"To what queſtion, ſir?"

"To a queſtion, ſir, to which I am determined to receive but *one* anſwer, and that a deciſive one."

"If ſo, it cannot relate to me, ſince I generally anſwer from the impulſe of the moment; *except* my reſolutions are decidedly taken."

"Give me no provocation, ſir!" cried Mr. Conway. "What reſolutions have you the power to make counter to mine?"

"Any that I have the will to keep,"

ſaid Conway. "To an independent ſpirit, power and will are the ſame."

"Look to it, Conway! You are on the point of hearing my propoſals for the laſt time. Will you, or will you not, marry Lady Octavia Conway?"

"I will not."

"Then," cried Mr. Conway, "from this time forward I retrench your income as much as in my power. Learn to live on your pay as an officer—at leaſt till you have learnt obedience—till then I renounce you."

"The leſſon is not ſtriking enough," ſaid Conway contemptuouſly. "The withdrawing ſo paltry an allowance will teach me nothing I have not already practiſed."

"Is that all?" cried Mr. Conway, graſping at the bare ſhadow of ſucceſs. "I will treble it, if you will comply."

"I am not to be bought, ſir!" ſaid Conway ſteadily.

"And I am not to be provoked, ſir;

with impunity," ſaid Mr. Conway aloud. "I will employ every means to humble you. I have intereſt, and I will uſe it; I will deprive you of your ſhip."

"I prevent you by renouncing it," cried Conway, furiouſly tearing the cockade out of his hat, and throwing it on the floor. "If this ſervice be ſubject to the influence of individuals; if it be made ſubſervient to the intereſt of family quarrels, and not to that of the men who ſacrifice their lives in it; if it be guided by cabal, and is made the inſtrument of deſpotiſm; I here renounce it *for ever.*" Conway expected no anſwer: he therefore waited for none, but quitted the houſe, and immediately returned to his own lodgings.

Here it was that Conway blamed his own precipitate paſſion, which, in ſpite of his reſolutions, had blinded his reaſon. He ſaw he had raſhly left himſelf without the ſmalleſt reſource by renouncing the

ſervice: he ſaw his own fate and that of Ethelreda involved in miſery, from which there was no hope, unleſs he could in ſome degree extricate himſelf by entering into foreign ſervice. It was therefore with a ſentiment ſomething like pleaſure he recollected an engagement to dine that day with Sir Francis L'Eſterling, to meet ſome foreigners of diſtinction, amongſt whom was the Swediſh Ambaſſador, whoſe intereſt and recommendation he meant to ſecure, before his father could be informed of his plans and by that means circumvent them. At Sir Francis L'Eſterling's door Conway heard of Mrs. Carloville. The ſervants were repeating her name, which was unknown to them, and commenting on her ſuppoſed buſineſs with Sir Francis. He enquired if they knew where ſhe was, and was directed to Groſvenor-ſquare.

The lights and people with the two chaiſes at the door ſhewed him the houſe

as he paſſed it. He walked into the room, or rather he advanced no further than the door, when the appearance of Ethelreda and Lord Caerleon, joined to a thouſand unfortunate ideas that ruſhed into his mind, conſpired, together with the circumſtances that previouſly agitated him, to work upon the impetuoſity of his temper, and raiſe his jealouſy almoſt to madneſs. He ruſhed out of the houſe, determined never more to ſee Ethelreda, and to puniſh her perfidy by killing Caerleon, and then himſelf. Their meeting appeared to him concerted; for the firſt time he thought he could account for his couſin's viſit to St. Siffrid's, and his confuſion in conſequence of their meeting.

He walked, or rather ran, to the Park, forgetting, or not obſerving, the darkneſs of the night made it impoſſible for them to decide their quarrel there. Fortunately they did not meet; for Conway in his delirium

delirium mentioned no place of appointment; and as Caerleon saw nothing of him when he pursued him into the street, he quietly returned to Lord Trecastle's house, expecting there to hear of him before the morning. Here he mused incessantly upon Ethelreda, and the evident connection between her and Captain Conway, till morning came and reminded him it was the day fixed for his marriage with Miss Beralston.

Conway's violence and rage soon subsided into grief; and whilst he wandered about in cold and darkness, he forgot his intended revenge, and felt nothing but the keenest sorrow and disappointment. He reproached himself with the blindness of his passion, that had made him forfeit every thing for a woman so unworthy: but each reflection as he made it lost something of its bitterness; and he finally determined not to condemn her unheard,

heard, becauſe ſhe had now a right to ſuch an indulgence.

Conway then returned to his home, reſolved to hear with calmneſs and to act with deciſion. If Ethelreda cleared herſelf to his ſatisfaction, he purpoſed openly to avow his marriage: but if a doubt remained upon his mind after the wiſhed-for explanation, he was fixed to leave her for ever. After ſuch a reſolution, the interval between morning and night paſſed tediouſly and painfully away, for it was not till evening that Conway wiſhed for an interview; for, as the event was doubtful, he thought he could not be too cautious in his proceedings.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

——so much of death her thoughts
Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.

MILTON.

TOWARDS morning Ethelreda began to recover her recollection and her ſenſes. In ſpite of the entreaties of her attendants, ſhe obſtinately perſiſted in dreſſing herſelf as uſual. Something like deſpair animated her to exert herſelf; and in effect her appearance of ſtrength and compoſure impoſed upon them, and made them believe her recovery real: but there was almoſt the ſhade of death over her countenance, whilſt ſhe imagined ſhe was gaining courage to hear compoſedly of that of Conway, ſo as to deceive her family, and ſpare it the mortification of

of ever diſcovering what ſhe termed her diſgraceful compliance. Whilſt ſhe ſat in ſilence, nearly fainting at every ſound, a note, or rather a letter by its length, was brought her from Conway. She read it, but without any emotions of joy or ſurpriſe; though ſhe was relieved, without perceiving it, from more than half her miſery. Conway related in as few words as poſſible his ſituation, and then aſked for one half-hour's converſation at eleven at night.

Ethelreda wrote with a trembling hand, "I ſhall be alone." She muſed inceſſantly on Conway's ſituation; ſhe thought of the legacy; but it was a thought ſhe ſpeedily rejected, and ſo ſhe knew would Conway. By a ſucceſſion of ideas, her mother's jewels recurred to her mind: thoſe jewels ſhe had ſo ſtrenuouſly refuſed to Carloville, ſhe now determined to give to Conway; and to oblige him to accept them, as all the

riches

riches ſhe had to offer. She ſent for them, for the caſket was with her clothes; and whilſt ſhe was looking them over, fondly trebling their value in her own mind, a card ſealed up was brought her, which ſhe read immediately. It contained an invitation to a *bal maſqué* that very night, from Sir Francis L'Eſterling. The envelope conſiſted of an elaborate apology for the unpardonable neglect his ſervant, who had been lately hired, had committed in not delivering Mrs. Carloville's meſſage directly, and entreating permiſſion to wait on her to obtain her pardon perſonally. As civilly as ſhe could, Ethelreda excuſed herſelf from either; and not without ſome apprehenſions of conſequences diſtreſſing and fatal, Ethelreda gave orders to admit no one but Captain Conway.

The ball was planned by Sir Francis, in order to compliment Lord Caerleon's marriage, which was not to take place

till

till the evening. It was to be a masqued entertainment, because Sir Francis, in imitation of Lord Caerleon's nonchalance, declared he detested the troublesome part of master of the house: "under a masque he was nobody." And very politely he sent a card to Lady Mariamne L'Esterling, as affording her a *decent* opportunity of reconciliation.

Lady Octavia, to whom this circumstance was communicated, purposed first calling on Lady Mariamne, and then on Miss Beralston, who had promised to accompany her to Sir Francis's house, to return from thence to her own, a new one of Lord Caerleon's.

Early in the evening Lady Octavia called upon her sister. Lady Mariamne received her with a countenance of consternation. "Octavia," said she, holding a note, "have you heard any thing? Have you received any anonymous letter?"

"Me?

"Me? No!" cried Lady Octavia.

"Well then, do not be alarmed: let me read you this. 'If you wish to be of material service to your sister, prevent Mrs. Carloville from staying at home this evening.'"

"It must mean something about the Count de Clerac!" said Octavia, looking silly and angry.

Lady Mariamne prided herself upon her knowledge of heraldry. "I have been examining the arms," said she. "Degraded! raguled! embattled. Three talbots or, passant, on a field gules? It informs me nothing. They may possibly be *foreign*. Let me look again.—What do you mean to do?"

"Heavens!" cried Lady Octavia, "how forgetful I am! I shall do nothing. She must be dead by this time." She then reminded her sister of the intelligence she had given her the preceding evening.

"Phoo!" said Lady Mariamne contemptuously.

temptuously. "Are you imposed on by a silly stratagem?"

"Nay," said Lady Octavia reddening, "you were imposed on yourself last night."

"Excuse me," said Lady Marianne. "I scarcely attended to any thing you said last night; I was extremely *absent*."

"I thought, infinitely too much so in your own house, for a person who aims at the manners of the world, Lady Marianne."

"I aim!" cried Lady Marianne, throwing down the note. "If you are not to be convinced that I am right, I advise your ladyship to follow your own *singular* judgment."

"I am *not* convinced, then," said Octavia, speaking against her conscience, "because I am not more open to stratagems and impositions, I think, than you are. I shall call however as we pass, to know if she is materially worse."

"As

"*As* you pleaſe."

"I ſhall call firſt on Miſs Beralſton."

Lady Mariamne made no anſwer, but took her ſeat in the carriage.

At Lord Beralſton's the ladies found Lord Caerleon and his bride, the really beautiful Roſamond, waiting their arrival. Lord Caerleon entreated them to make uſe of his coach: but the ladies did not acquieſce. Lady Octavia told him, they were going to call at Mrs. Carloville's door, and would meet him at Sir Francis L'Eſterling's.

"But I am reſolved not to loſe ſight of you," ſaid he, as gaily as he could, though at the ſame moment his features exhibited anxiety and fatigue. No more objections were made, and both carriages ſtopped at Mrs. Carloville's.

Lady Octavia's ſervants, who had had no directions to the contrary, inſtantly opened the door and let down the ſtep. "My miſtreſs is not at home," ſaid the man

who

who anſwered the door; who having received his miſtreſs's orders not to admit any one but Captain Conway, ſaid, ſhe was not at home, without waiting till he was aſked.

"Not at home!" cried Lady Octavia, haſtily leaving the carriage as ſhe ſpoke, without conſidering the impropriety of the proceeding. "Not at home! You muſt be miſtaken. She keeps her bed." By this time ſhe had reached the drawing-room door, which ſhe had opened herſelf; and, followed by the other ladies, who had quitted the carriage, ſhe entered.

Ethelreda roſe feebly to receive them; ſhe endeavoured to conceal her ſurpriſe, and attempted to ſpeak; but the effort overcame her ſtrength, and ſhe was obliged to reſume her ſeat.

Lady Octavia, as ſoon as ſhe had recovered from the confuſion ſhe felt from her own abruptneſs and ill breeding, repeatedly

peatedly expreſſed her amazement at ſeeing Mrs. Carloville. She begged many pardons for the intruſion; but added, they only meant to wait below whilſt Miſs Beralſton ſaw her, as they apprehended illneſs confined her to her bed. "But," continued Lady Octavia, "you now intend to be at the maſquerade this evening?"

Mrs. Carloville ſhook her head.

Miſs Beralſton approached her, and, taking her hand with more affection than ſhe had lately ſhown her, "Let *me* perſuade you, dear Mrs. Carloville!" ſaid ſhe. "It will be the laſt favour you will ever confer on Roſamond Beralſton!"

Ethelreda embraced her affectionately, and wiſhed her every kind of happineſs.

"You will go with us, then?"

Ethelreda again declined, and entreated her to pardon the refuſal, ſince to comply was impoſſible.

"And why impoſſible?" aſked Lady Octavia.

Ethelreda

Ethelreda pleaded her dreſs, for want of ſomething elſe to ſay, as ſhe had already done her health and her numerous employments, together with her very ſhort ſtay in town.

"Theſe are all frivolous objections," ſaid Lady Mariamne, "to which I am certain you expect no attention. Come, ſend for your cloak. We ſhall be too late," continued ſhe, with ſurpriſe; "it is paſt ten o'clock."

"It cannot be!" ſaid Ethelreda with alarm; and involuntarily ſhe put her hand on the caſe of jewels, which, though open on the table, had been till then unobſerved by the ladies. At that moment Lord Caerleon approached: he had been waiting anxiouſly in his own carriage, till, ſurpriſed at their ſtay, and unable to bear his reflections on Mrs. Carloville's ſuppoſed illneſs, he ventured to enter the houſe, without any expectation of ſeeing Ethelreda, but in hopes of hearing

ſomething

ſomething that might relieve him from his ſtate of ſuffering and ſuſpenſe.

Ethelreda, who ſaw him, inſtantly ſtarted with terror and diſmay; the lateneſs of the hour made her dread that Conway would make his appearance one moment after the other. It was terrible to think of the appointment being diſcovered even by the ladies; but at the ſight of Caerleon Ethelreda thought only of death and bloodſhed. She repeatedly entreated ſhe might not detain them. Lady Octavia became more preſſing that ſhe ſhould go, and Miſs Beralſton begged to remain with her. Lord Caerleon ſtood at ſome diſtance without venturing to ſpeak.

Poor Ethelreda's ſituation became every moment more diſtreſſing, and ſhe trembled like a condemned criminal. She conſidered a few moments, and ſaw no poſſible means of avoiding the horrors that ſeemed to threaten her, but by com-

plying with the uncivil importunity of the two ladies; for Miſs Beralſton had ceaſed to torment her.

"I will go," cried ſhe, gaſping with terror, "I will go immediately!" Miſs Beralſton, who ſaw her reluctance and wiſhed to relieve her, ſaid there was not time to dreſs.

"Mrs. Carloville is already dreſſed," ſaid Lady Octavia impatiently. "Nothing is ſo becoming as muſlin; and when I have twiſted theſe pearls amongſt the plaits of her hair," added ſhe, taking them out of the caſket, "and put on theſe ear-rings and bracelets, I am perſuaded ſhe will be perfectly well ſatisfied with her own appearance."

"I do not doubt it," ſaid Lady Mariamne, with her uſual manner.

Ethelreda ſaid nothing, and Lady Octavia attired her as ſhe thought proper. "Put a bandeau acroſs the forehead," ſaid Lord Caerleon, ſpeaking for the firſt

time. Octavia was proceeding to put on the bracelets. "Fasten the sleeves above the elbows with those, Octavia," said he: "it has more an air of the antique."

Ethelreda observed nothing, objected to nothing; she walked hastily to the carriage in an agony of fear and regret. She had no opportunity of leaving either a note or a message for Conway when he came; and this levity and unfeeling caprice of her conduct, as it would appear to him, employed her thoughts till the carriage stopped in Harley-street.

When Ethelreda stepped out of the carriage into the hall, she could scarcely support herself: several characters, who were entering at the same time, surround-ed her; and their exclamations alone reminded her she was without a masque.

"It is the goddess Juno!" said one; "or Venus herself, who has left Cupids and her doves at Paphos!"—"It is either the *statue* of the goddess just de-

 scended

ſcended from a pedeſtal!" ſaid another. Indeed no human figure ever repreſented a ſtatue more juſtly than that of Ethelreda. The ſymmetry of her figure, her features perfectly Grecian, added to her dreſs, which, according to Lord Caerleon's direction, was quite after the antique—in ſhort, nothing but the colour of her hair and her large dark eyes made her deviate in appearance from that of a ſtatue, ſince her complexion was perfect marble, and ſhe ſtood motionleſs and ſilent for ſome moments, leaning againſt a pillar in the hall. So ſhocked at being the object of curioſity and obſervation, under circumſtances ſo peculiarly diſtreſſing, ſhe could neither ſpeak, nor proceed after the reſt of her party, who, unconſcious ſhe did not follow them, were already diſperſed, and loſt to her, amidſt the crowds that Sir Francis had once more aſſembled to amuſe themſelves and laugh at him.

Ethelreda at laſt recovered the uſe of ſpeech,

ſpeech, ſo as to deſire a ſervant to call Lady Octavia's carriage. It had driven off. "Lord Caerleon's, then!" cried ſhe, with agitation and impatience. The ſervant, throwing open the door of the library, which was almoſt the only private room in the houſe, deſired ſhe would remain there till the carriage could draw up. At the ſame moment a figure in a domino, advancing from the crowd, which had continued to increaſe till it made almoſt a large circle round her, called Ethelreda by her name, and, offering an arm, followed her into the library and ſhut the door.

Poor Ethelreda caſt her eyes upon the intruder, but ſaid nothing: ſhe was too much intimidated by the innumerable mortifications and terrors ſhe had already ſuffered to object to the Domino, who appeared not to take any notice of her, but walked ſeveral times acroſs the room from one ſide to the other in evi-

dent embarrassment. He stopped at last, and desired her "not to be alarmed."

It was not a sentence calculated to dispel fear. Ethelreda made no answer, but feebly attempted to reach the door. The Domino stretched out one hand to intercept her, and with the other presented a masque, which he desired her to put on instantly.

"Let me pass!" cried Ethelreda in an inarticulate tone, which betrayed her want of courage to insist on it; "you have no right to detain me."

"I *have* a right," said the Domino: "Do *you* pretend to deny it?"

Ethelreda dropped upon her knees.

"Do you not know my voice?"

"Oh yes!" cried Ethelreda, clasping her hands wildly.

"No noise, no noise!" said the Domino, raising her almost lifeless from the floor, and fastening the masque before her face: then throwing his own domino over her shoulders,

ſhoulders, under which he wore another of a different colour, he ſupported or rather carried her to the door of the library, and from thence into the ſtreet, repeating in a low but abſolute tone, "Silence! at your peril."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

——how chances mock
And changes fill the cup of alteration
With divers liquors! O, if this were seen,
The happiest youth, viewing his progress through,
What perils past, what crosses to ensue,
Would shut the book, and sit him down and die.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE party from Grosvenor-square proposed making a very short stay in Harley-street; and when the hour was expired, and Lord Caerleon had repeatedly intimated, though without much animation, that the good Bishop was waiting for them at Lord Beralston's; Miss Beralston, with her new sisters that were to be, left Sir Francis's house, after having searched ineffectually for Mrs.

Mrs. Carloville. Lady Octavia ſpared no pains to diſcover her: neither had Lord Caerleon been regardleſs of her abſence; nor had his own concerns prevented him from making a thouſand anxious conjectures upon it.

At a few minutes after eleven, Conway walked with agitation and apprehenſions to Groſvenor-ſquare. He knocked gently, and, without aſking any queſtions of the ſervant, walked at once into the room in which he had ſeen her the night before. He ſtarted when he perceived it empty, and, turning to the man who followed him, aſked for his miſtreſs.—The ſervant ſaid, " She was not at home."

Conway told his name, imagining that Mrs. Carloville was partially denied.

" My miſtreſs is not at home, ſir," repeated the man.

" Where is ſhe, then?" aſked Conway,

his lips quivering partly with rage and partly with fear as he ſpoke.

"Lord Caerleon's ſervant told me they were going to the ball at Sir Francis L'Eſterling's."

"Did Mrs. Carloville go with Lord Caerleon?" aſked Conway with tolerable calmneſs.

He again ſaid, ſhe did.

"What dreſs did ſhe wear?—How am I to know her?"

The ſervant ſaid, "She wore her uſual dreſs, and no maſque."

"And no maſque!" repeated Conway as he left the houſe. "Does ſhe then ſet all decency at defiance?"—It was a hard ſentence for Conway to pronounce of Ethelreda, and he would willingly have made excuſes for her; but too many unfortunate circumſtances had occurred to impreſs his mind unfavourably. Wavering every moment in his intentions, Conway ſometimes thought of refuſing

to hear her justification, should Ethelreda pretend to offer it.

Conway walked anxiously through all the rooms, looking inquisitively at every object that moved before his eyes, without taking any notice of the superb presepio, with which Sir Francis had ornamented his room, according to the Italian fashion at Christmas. He searched in vain either for Ethelreda or Lord Caerleon; he saw none unmasqued. Sir Francis himself was not to be found amongst the company; and Conway was returning through the hall, chilled with suspicions, when, recollecting the library as he passed the door, he abruptly threw it open, and beheld Sir Francis at a table covered with books, pens, and paper. Conway made no scruple of interrupting his studies by asking without ceremony for Mrs. Carloville and Lord Caerleon.

Sir Francis stared a few moments as

if he had ſeen a viſion; then holding up his finger in token of ſilence, he reſumed his pen. Conway impatiently repeated his queſtion.

"Stop three moments, and I will read it to you," ſaid Sir Francis.

"Where are Mrs. Carloville and Caerleon?" cried Conway.

"Gone to be married—*He* is," ſaid Sir Francis, calmly.

"You are mad, Sir Francis!" cried Conway, forgetting there was another woman in the univerſe beſides Ethelreda.

"Credo di no!" ſaid Sir Francis, bowing to Conway, as he held in his hand the paper of verſes he had been writing, and which he looked upon as an inconteſtable evidence to the contrary. At the ſame time he began to read them, in order to diſprove the aſſertion: but Conway was content to take his word, and proceeded precipitately to Lord Trecaſtle's houſe, where, enquiring for the family,

family, he was directed to that of Lord Beralston; and pursuing the chain of ideas the forgotten name raised in his mind, he expected to find Ethelreda there at the marriage of Rosamond. He boldly walked into the room, without making any interrogations, just as the bishop had closed his book, and pronounced the concluding sentence of the ceremony.

Conway looked at each, and each looked at him; for it was an unusual thing to see him of late, at least to any part of his own family. He scarcely waited till the new married pair had received the congratulations of the company, before he beckoned Caerleon into another room, to ask what he had done with Mrs. Carloville.

Caerleon looked surprised; but immediately related all that had passed, since her arrival in town, with an air of sincerity that left no doubt upon the candid

candid mind of Conway; and finished by saying, she must be returned to her own house. "And now," continued Caerleon, "in return for my candour, tell me, Have you any right to make Mrs. Carloville's concerns your own?"

Conway hesitated: he was impressed with gratitude at Caerleon's manner of answering his numerous and apparently impertinent questions, and, convinced of his sincerity, was on the point of telling him every thing; but recollecting how strenuously Ethelreda had insisted upon secrecy, he entreated him not to ask for this confidence. "Do you not perceive I am under restrictions?"

"Which I am the last man in the world to urge you to break!" said Caerleon smiling sneeringly, whilst reserve and disappointment clouded his face. "I know that to be let into a confidence of this nature, is only to share foolish difficulties, which *you sentimental people*

love to monopolize;—and with all my soul I leave them to you!"—They shook each other by the hand, and separated apparently satisfied.

Lord Caerleon, if he had been decidedly any thing, might have had some generosity. In asking for his cousin's confidence, he did not mean to make a bad use of it, nor was he actually determined to serve him. Be it as it will, he was piqued at Conway's reserve, after he had condescended to explain his own conduct: and though so recently married, the idea of Ethelreda still fixed itself upon his fancy; and since Conway did not choose to impart his schemes, instead of assisting, as was partly his motive in asking, he resolved to plague him with lies, and amuse himself with the quarrels he should occasion. He sighed when he recollected, that to such a woman as Ethelreda his attentions were no longer formidable, whatever they might

might once have been; for he was married!

Conway once more took the way to Grosvenor-square. The explanation Lord Caerleon had given, perfectly satisfied him with regard to Ethelreda's conduct: but still he was at a loss to account for her being in London; he feared something unfortunate and distressing had brought her there; it was a mystery he much wished to penetrate; and whilst he consoled himself with the thoughts of soon seeing Ethelreda, and hearing all his doubts cleared up by her lips, he felt not bodily fatigue—though he had endured more, heightened by the agitation of his mind, within the last two days, than most constitutions are able to support.

Conway stood some moments deliberating at the door: an idea seized him that Ethelreda wished to avoid him, and to fly from the contagion of his misfortunes:

fortunes: he walked a few paces from the door, then suddenly returning, knocked with violence, resolved to rid himself of his insupportable suspicions at once by an immediate conversation.

The door was opened by the same servant. Conway repeated his questions, and received the same answers. His whole soul was chilled with apprehensions; yet still suspecting the servant of a falsehood, he seized him by the collar, and, shutting the room-door, protested he would kill him if he did not tell the whole truth instantly. The unfortunate servant gave himself up for lost: he was persuaded, Conway by his whole demeanour was mad, and that nothing but the most abject submission would deprecate his threatened sufferings: falling on his knees, he entreated no harm might happen to him, and he would discover the whole, which he said he had been forbidden to repeat. He began by saying,

ing, two persons had been there, but that they were gone about half an hour since.

"Who were they?" cried Conway fiercely.

"They were both masqued," said the man.

"But you knew your mistress's dress?"

"No, sir; because my mistress went out dressed in white, and the person I am speaking of had on a black dress: but I *think* it was her voice."

"And the other was Lord Caerleon!" said Conway, relapsing into his former error. "I dare say it was," cried the man; "for he had on the same dress, I remember it was scarlet."

Conway's eyes flashed fire, and he lifted up his hand three times, with an intention of striking his prisoner: but he restrained himself from such an outrage; and the miserable informer, entreating him to have patience and hear

the

the rest, moved step by step towards the door.

"Speak truth, then, as you value your life!" exclaimed Conway with sternness.

"I do, sir!" said the man.

"Go on."

"The person in black gave me a note, which the one in scarlet ordered me to give to a man who waited at the street-door: in a short time after, a gentleman in black, with two others, came; they all went into the drawing-room, where they staid some time: I then let them out again, and they went away in a hackney-coach."

"What, all?" said Conway.

"No!" said the man. "Those in the masques staid a few moments; the one I took for my mistress fainted away, and I was ordered to bring a glass of water; and presently after, the person in scarlet walked through the hall with

her

her in his arms into the ſtreet, and called out to me not to ſay——"

Thus far the man proceeded without any interruption from Conway, who had been ſupporting himſelf by leaning on a chair. A ſenſation he had never experienced before, in ſpite of his eagerneſs to hear the concluſion of the narrative, overpowered him as the ſervant was finiſhing the ſentence, and he fell upon the floor in a fainting fit. The terrified domeſtic joyfully ſeized the welcome opportunity of making his eſcape, very willingly leaving Captain Conway to recover at his leiſure. He however locked the door, in order to prevent any thing like a purſuit, whilſt he proceeded directly to Portman-ſquare, in order to inform the family there of Captain Conway's ſuppoſed derangement.

By this time it was paſt twelve o'clock; and Mrs. Conway, who kept early hours, was ſpared the pain of hearing the ſervant's

vant's deplorable ſtory. Mr. Conway was in his ſtudy with his ſecretary, looking over papers, and had given orders not to be interrupted. The ſervants therefore were rather averſe to making the ſtory known till the morning, proteſting at the ſame time their entire diſbelief of Captain Conway's madneſs. But the man himſelf, who had been too powerfully impreſſed with the idea of his phrenſy to be diſſuaded from his purpoſe, followed the ſervants to the very door of the ſtudy, repeating, "He's as mad as a March hare! I thought he would have killed me!"—The man, finding it neceſſary to raiſe his voice, in order to enforce the truth of his report, very ſoon brought the ſecretary to the door, who with no very complacent countenance enquired the cauſe of the diſturbance. Mr. Conway too advanced, upon hearing the name of his ſon repeated by ſeveral of the ſervants, whom the

the strange story had drawn to the door of the study.

"What does this noise mean?" said Mr. Conway sternly. All his servants were silent instantly, and the courier, rather impressed with his manner, hesitated so conveniently, that he gave to his whole story the air of a falsehood. Mr. Conway heard him patiently, and then said, "Present my compliments to Captain Conway, and tell him, I have long suspected his madness; and when he has recovered his senses, I shall be glad to see him." He was about to shut the door; but happening to look at the livery, he asked the man, to whom he belonged?

"To Mrs. Carloville—that is—to Mr. Harwood I mean."

"Ha ha! an excellent plot and very good friends!" said Mr. Conway. "How difficult it is," continued he, turning to his secretary with a look of extreme

self-

self-approbation, "for people to impose on a man practised in the intricate science of politics! particularly when they employ such agents as these," pointing to the servant, "who cannot deliver a message without betraying the whole shallow contrivance."

The secretary assented of course, as he followed his principal into the study and shut the door upon the group, who, moving gently from the passage, heard the whole account of the two Dominos, and Captain Conway's distraction, related in a half-whisper by the scared servant, who towards one o'clock ventured to return, after promising the servants to bring Mrs. Conway the whole account in the morning, and to treat his prisoner with all possible lenity in the mean time.

This latter trouble however was spared him; for Conway no sooner recovered his senses, than, applying to the door, he removed every impediment to

his

his retreat, by forcing it open; and from thence into the street, he found no farther difficulties to contend with.

It would be impossible to describe the state of Conway's mind, when he reached his own lodgings: not one syllable of the narrative had been lost upon him; and when he recovered his senses after the fainting, he wished to lose them for ever. That Ethelreda was separated from him for ever, by an act of her own, whilst he had a solemn right to share his fate with her, and without bringing infamy and disgrace upon herself she could not take the protection of a stranger; that Ethelreda had committed this flagrant outrage against decency and morals, appeared to Conway not doubtful, but positive as far as appearances the most convincing could be relied on. And yet the whole tenor of Ethelreda's preceding conduct seemed almost to invalidate the testimony of his senses; and whilst

whilſt he recapitulated in his own mind her numerous perfections, he could not perſuade himſelf ſhe was not ſtill the ſame paragon ſhe had hitherto appeared. He once more owned, the impetuoſity of his temper had hurried him into exceſſes injurious both to himſelf and her. He began to think there was a neceſſity in this myſterious conduct, which he had not ſufficient penetration to dive into; that it was impoſſible Caerleon, circumſtanced as he was, could have had leiſure to engage in an intrigue—that ſcarlet dominos were very common—that it might have been Harwood himſelf, and motives out of his knowledge might have made this diſguiſe neceſſary. The thought no ſooner occurred to Conway, than, catching at it with all the eagerneſs of deſpair, he perſuaded himſelf he had unravelled the whole enigma. He inſtantly ſeized a pen, and wrote a letter to Mrs. Harwood, full of in-

coherent apologies for the liberty he was taking in enquiring for Mrs. Carloville, and promising at some future period to make it appear it was not an unjustifiable one. He sealed it however, without specifying the information he wished to receive from Mrs. Harwood in return—some account of Ethelreda's arrival. He fortunately had heard Sir Francis say they were at Falmouth waiting for a wind: thither he directed his letter; and having ordered his servant to send it by express, he threw himself upon a sopha.

For two nights Conway had not taken any kind of repose; and notwithstanding the restless agitation of his mind, his broken and disturbed slumbers lasted till late in the morning. When he awoke, he found a short note from his mother, requesting to know what had given rise to the strange reports of the preceding evening, which she

ſhe diſcredited in the main; but, fearing ſomething unpleaſant had happened to occaſion them, ſhe appointed him to breakfaſt with her, ignorant of the lengths to which Conway and his father had carried their contention the preceding day.

Conway, in anſwer, excuſed himſelf from waiting on his mother; but begged to ſee her as ſoon as poſſible, that he might ſtate the whole account of the miſunderſtanding between himſelf and his father. This anſwer perplexed Mrs. Conway extremely, for ſhe had been deſired by her huſband not to countenance her ſon in his diſobedience, which ſhe very well knew amounted to a prohibition; and, careful not to irritate him by non-compliance, though but with an implied command, Mrs. Conway was under the neceſſity of hearing the whole by letter; and the only conſolation ſhe could afford her ſon, was ſome pe-

 cuniary

cuniary affiftance, which fhe gueffed he very much ftood in need of.

In this pofture ftood the affair, when Conway's exprefs reached Falmouth.

Fortunately the letter was brought to Mr. Harwood, who, dreading it might convey fome intelligence fatal to Mrs. Harwood in the prefent weak ftate of her health, gave orders that neither the letter nor the manner of its arrival fhould be mentioned before her; and not without agitation, and trembling for what it might contain, he broke the feal, and inftantly looked at the fignature. When he faw it was from Conway, he read it with more compofure, and was for fome time at a lofs for its purport, it was expreffed with fo little coherence: but after a fecond perufal the fum of all the information it contained, was, that Ethelreda was miffing; for Harwood knew

ſhe was not with him, and with him Conway had ſettled it ſhe was.

What was to be done? Where was he to look for Ethelreda? What was become of his children? Harwood in his perplexity could not anſwer one of theſe interrogations he made to himſelf. He took half a dozen turns acroſs the room, reprobated Conway's impatience, execrated his expreſs, and concluded ſhe was on the road with her retinue. He went immediately to Mrs. Harwood, told her he expected to meet Ethelreda on the road, within a ſtage or two; entreated her not to ſuffer any anxiety for their arrival, and accordingly departed to meet her. He went the firſt few miles of his journey with tolerable compoſure; but ſtill finding his expected family did not advance, he grew impatient, ordered a ſecond pair of horſes to be added to his carriage, his fears increaſing in proportion as he

proceeded towards London: at length, highly alarmed, he determined not to return till he gained some information, and consequently continued his journey without rest or interruption till he reached Pall Mall, whither the date of Conway's letter directed him.

By chance Conway was at home. He was just returned from a fruitless application to the Swedish Ambassador. Mr. Conway had been before-hand with his son, and had so far secured his brother of the diplomatic corps in his interest, by his plausibility and coolness, that the Ambassador gravely and politely recommended to Captain Conway a reconciliation with his father, in preference to any foreign service, and declined interfering in the affair but as a mediator; in which character he very cordially offered his good offices, but in no other. These Conway civilly declined, and was musing on his future prospects,

profpects, when Harwood burft into the room.

Conway's heart died with fear, when he faw anxiety and expectation on Harwood's countenance. "She is not with you!" cried he.

"No," faid the other defpondingly.

Conway fnatched up his fword. He had not worn any part of his profeffional drefs fince his renunciation of the fervice. He was already at the door when Harwood, alarmed at his manner, feized his arm, and afked what he intended to do.

"I cannot tell! Do not afk me!"—cried he, trying to difengage his arm from Harwood's grafp.

"At leaft let me be of your party!—It is as much my defire as yours to difcover them."

"I will hold this point to his throat, till he tell me what is become of her!" cried Conway.

"Him!—Who?—what do you mean?

—what do you ſuſpect?" ſaid Harwood, ſcarcely articulating from eagerneſs.

"Caerleon."

"Caerleon!—" repeated Harwood; "Caerleon!—Do you recollect that you are talking of Ethelreda?—You know nothing of her, Conway;—you do not deſerve to know her, whilſt you diſtract yourſelf with ridiculous whims injurious to her, and contrary to common ſenſe."

Though Harwood's tone and countenance were ſtrongly tinctured with anger and ſeverity, there was ſomething in his confident manner that conveyed a ſentiment of hope to the irritated mind of Conway. He loſt his rage in a moment, and, throwing down his ſword, "Let us go to Sir Francis L'Eſterling's," cried he: "perhaps he may be able to give us ſome information by this time."

Harwood agreed. In the courſe of their walk, however, he learned from Conway the place of Mrs. Carloville's abode,

abode, for the short time she had been in London: he proposed therefore to call in Grosvenor-square first, in order to inform himself of every thing that had passed; for Conway had related nothing in detail, he was too much occupied in explaining his fears and suspicions. Here, to his equal joy and surprise, Harwood found his children. The servants were anxiously expecting the return of Mrs. Carloville, who had been missing, they told him, since the night of Sir Francis L'Esterling's entertainment, and for whose absence they could find no sufficient reason.

Every occurrence that had been related to Captain Conway, was again repeated to Mr. Harwood. The appearance of mystery in the whole transaction, her being in Lord Carloville's house, her fainting, and lastly her disappearance, were all circumstances so embarrassing, that Harwood protested the

intricate detail exceeded his comprehension, that he knew not what to think, how to determine, or where to begin a search. At all events, he thought it best to dispatch the children immediately; since their absence would relieve him from a considerable care, in some degree take off from Mrs. Harwood's solitude, and the extreme anxiety she felt to see them, as well as her sister, for whose absence he made a plausible excuse, not to alarm her with the knowledge of Ethelreda's uncertain fate. No great preparations were necessary; so that in the course of an hour Harwood had completed thus much of his intention, and taken up his abode at a hotel, whither he and Conway adjourned to consult upon the most expedient methods of commencing a search, in preference to going to Sir Francis L'Esterling's; from whom, upon deliberation, they were certain of receiv-

ing

ing little or no information, particularly as Conway now recollected he had already made a fruitless application to him.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Celui qui met un frein à la fureur des flots,
Sçait aussi des méchans arrêter les complots.

RACINE.

SIR Francis L'Esterling, who hated business of any kind that had the slightest claims to be called useful, had just been reading a letter in consequence of an application from the new Lord Carloville to rent St. Siffrid's Castle. His steward had transacted the business, and with some difficulty had prevailed on him to read the terms, which Sir Francis had given him full powers to make. He was about to resume his geometrical studies, when he was forced to submit to another interruption—the entrance of a stranger un-announced, of

of no very promising appearance; a large man, apparently about forty, whose fiery visage evidently exhibited tokens of hard drinking, was shewn into the breakfast-room.

Sir Francis received the stranger with a kind of distant civility, and remained silent, in expectation of hearing something in which most probably he was not concerned, with an expression of careless fatigue on his countenance he took no pains to conceal, whilst he turned over some ground-plans, and geometrical elevations of designs in architecture, and with some difficulty refrained from going on with the work of compass, square and rule.—The stranger, after making a slight apology for the very apparent interruption, asked if Sir Francis could give him any information with regard to Mrs. Harwood's present abode. After a moment's hesitation, Sir Francis said, "he believed they

they were at Dover, or Southampton, or Falmouth; he knew they were going abroad."

"And Lady Carloville?"—asked the stranger.

"Lady Carloville! Lady Carloville!" repeated Sir Francis, with a puzzled and astonished air; "Did you ask me, sir, for Lady Carloville?"

"Yes, sir, I wished to know if she will be of Mr. Harwood's party to the continent."

"You have really asked me a very perplexing question, sir!" said Sir Francis. "For, having never spoken to the lady in question, and having only once seen her about two nights since, in a very large circle, when only the ceremony of introduction passed between us, I cannot be supposed to know much of her Ladyship's concerns."

"I can readily account for your not knowing me, Sir Francis!" said the stranger

ſtranger with ſome reſentment.—“ But your denying any acquaintance with your couſin, is ſo whimſical and ſo affronting, that, if it were evening inſtead of mid-day, I ſhould ſuſpect your ſenſes and perceptions were not perfectly clear.”

“ Really, ſir!” cried Sir Francis with an air of drollery, “ I beg your pardon! But never having ſtudied the table of affinity, I did not think relationſhip extended ſo wide.”

“ Then you do not of courſe conſider me as any?”

“ Not the moſt diſtant!—May I beg your name?”

“ My name, ſir, is Carloville, and my inclination to be as diſtant as yours. My ſteward, if you pleaſe, will wait upon you, when you are at leiſure, to ſettle the rent and repairs of the Caſtle, before I become your tenant.”

“ You ſurpriſe me extremely, ſir! infinitely!

finitely! I am precipitated into perplexity without end! I can give you no reaſon upon earth for it; but I concluded the preſent Lord Carloville to be diametrically the reverſe of you! I have only ſeen him tranſiently, it is true; but he appeared to me to be tall and thin, and rather inclining to pale, with dark eyes, and not above half your age."

"You may take my word for it, then, ſir, he whom you deſcribe was not Lord Carloville—who has the ſatisfaction of wiſhing you a good day."—The ſtranger departed, leaving Sir Francis abſolutely bewildered with conjectures.

In the mean time Conway and Harwood were ſpending their ſtrength and ſpirits in fruitleſs reſearches after Ethelreda. Harwood, who could form to himſelf no poſſible motive within his knowledge, was perplexed and haraſſed by a thouſand vague and unmeaning ſurmiſes, none of which he dared venture

ture to communicate to Conway, whoſe deſpair and violence wanted no provocation to rouſe him into turbulence and unruly paſſion. Indeed it was not without ſome trouble and exertion that Harwood prevented him from breaking out into acts of extravagance bordering on phrenſy, as their proſpects of ſucceſs became loſt in increaſing obſcurity.

Without the leaſt guide or clue to her concealment, it appeared to Harwood abſolutely impoſſible that by any effort of theirs Ethelreda could be diſcovered. It did not appear that any violence had been uſed to take her away from Groſvenor-ſquare, but the contrary; and he more than half believed, though without the ſhadow of imputation on Ethelreda's prudence, that her ſecluſion was voluntary, and that perhaps to her ſiſter ſhe would diſcover herſelf. But with theſe hints Harwood was conſcious, vague and wild

wild as they were, he dared not trust Conway; nor could he venture to make any enquiries of his wife, lest the knowledge of Ethelreda's disappearance should prevent, as he knew it would, the meditated voyage to Lisbon, so necessary to her health: and it was with the most painful reluctance he saw the necessity of giving up this melancholy search, for the preservation of Mrs. Harwood's life.

Yet he thought there was something horrid in leaving Conway alone, without a friend to calm his passions and influence his reason. To prevail on him to give up the pursuit he knew to be actually impossible, or he would have entreated him to accompany them; but, with the knowledge he had of Conway's temper, his ardour, his firmness, his never-to-be wearied diligence in accomplishing a purpose where his honour and his heart were concerned, he cautiously

avoided

avoided mentioning the relinquishing of the purpose, lest such a proposal should exasperate the already disturbed state of Conway's mind to desperation and madness. Thus distracted with fears and apprehensions of every kind, Harwood was at last reduced to an expedient that had occurred to him, and been rejected in his own mind, and which of course he had not communicated to Conway—it was that of inserting an advertisement in the public papers.

From the noise such an affair publicly known must make in the world, both Conway and Harwood were averse to it; but having canvassed every possible advantage and disadvantage of such a step, and being thoroughly convinced they could substitute no other equally efficacious (for in effect they had tried almost every other), they finally resolved to insert an advertisement describing

ſcribing her perſon and dreſs, but without mentioning a ſyllable of the ſuppoſed companion of her flight. Conway, as having ſeen her laſt, undertook to give the deſcription. He ſat down to the table, and with a trembling hand and agitated ſpirits attempted to write; whilſt Harwood went to call on Lord Caerleon and Sir Francis L'Eſterling, neither of whom he had yet been able to meet with, in order, if it were poſſible, to gather from them ſome information, in addition to what he had already learned from Conway.

Harwood went firſt to Lord Caerleon's houſe, whom he intended aſking to accompany him to Sir Francis L'Eſterling's. He met his Lordſhip croſſing the hall, with an aſpect ſo cloudy and diſcompoſed, that Harwood, ſtruck by a gloomineſs in Lord Caerleon ſo unuſual, inſtead of the ordinary greetings

that

that take place between acquaintance after an absence, accosted him by asking what was the matter.

"Nothing—except that I am married!" said Caerleon, with one of his sneering smiles. "Here, you may *look* at the lady, if you please!" continued he, throwing open a door: "but I rather advise you not to speak to her, lest she and the other ladies" (meaning Lady Mariamne and Lady Octavia) "should exasperate you, as I guess your first question, still more than they have done me."

Harwood, a little disconcerted at being so abruptly let into the family secrets in the hearing of the ladies, and struck both with Caerleon's hint and the ungracious manner in which they received him (for neither of them showed him any other civility than a slight curtsy), advanced no farther than the door; and, turning to Lord Caerleon, intimated a wish to speak to him in private.

"Oh,

"Oh, as to that, Mr. Harwood," cried Lady Caerleon, fearful left the subject should not be difcuffed in her hearing, "we all guefs your bufinefs with my Lord."

"If you come to make enquiries after Mrs. Carloville, I advife you to apply to the Count de Clerac." faid Lady Octavia.

"By no means!" cried the lady of the houfe, the colour rifing in her face— "I am perfuaded, my Lord can give you ample information, if he choofe."

Lord Caerleon would willingly have paffed over thefe fcandalous hints, by telling Mr. Harwood, he would attend him to another room; but Harwood, whofe anger, once roufed, was not eafily appeafed, placing his back againft the door, faid calmly, "We will wait, if you pleafe, my lord, till thefe ladies have condefcended to come to fome kind of explanation!"

As

"As you pleaſe, ſir," ſaid Caerleon, placing himſelf in a chair; "but I would have you remember, that jealous women and ſpiteful women do not always adhere to truth."

There was ſomething ſo cutting in Caerleon's manner, that his lady, who had no idea her jealous airs were to be treated with ſo little ceremony, could only ſhow her anger by burſting into tears. Both the ſiſters, darting furious glances at their brother, in which Harwood came in for his ſhare, tried to conſole her; and Lord Caerleon, with the moſt provoking unconcerned countenance he could aſſume, turning to Harwood, ſaid, "You ſee, we do not lead a *very* inſipid life!"

Harwood, embarraſſed with the awkwardneſs of being a witneſs to this ſpiteful quarrel, was on the point of taking his departure; when the lady, enraged to the laſt degree at her lord's compoſure,

composure, protesting she would not stay in his house to be so publicly and notoriously ill-treated, rushed into the hall to order her carriage.

Harwood made the best of his way into the street, and Caerleon followed him in a sort of angry silence, till they came to Sir Francis L'Esterling's.

Here they found Sir Francis in the deepest perplexity about the strange man who had just quitted him. "Oh, Mr. Harwood! I am extremely glad to see you!" cried he. "Pray do you know any thing of my new tenant at the Castle?—The most extraordinary man! He talked of you and my cousin, till really I could not understand him. By Jove I begin to think he is an impostor!"

Sir Francis's rapid discourse at that moment was interrupted by the entrance of the Count de Clerac, who, addressing himself to Caerleon, exclaimed,

"I

"Il eſt reſſuſcité! De Winterfeldt eſt reſſuſcité!"

"What?—Who?" cried Harwood and Caerleon in the ſame moment.

"Colonel de Winterfeldt!" ſaid the Count. "Cela m'a frappé un peu!" continued he, "becauſe I owed him, par hazard, a little money. J'ai cru qu'il fût mort tout de bon: il n'a pas trop l'air d'un revenant cependant."

"Bring him here, if you can, this moment!" cried Harwood, with conſternation and horror on his countenance. Caerleon too appeared equally diſmayed at this unaccountable ſtory, and, ſnatching up his hat, accompanied De Clerac in his purſuit.

Harwood was no longer at a loſs to account for Ethelreda's ſudden diſappearance: he concluded ſhe was in Carloville's power; and the miſery of her fate, and the idea of her ſufferings, almoſt took away his ſenſes. Still how-

ever he was ignorant of the latter part of her melancholy ſtory, as it regarded Conway; nor could he reconcile to himſelf, or account for, the falſe report of his death. All he could gather from Sir Francis confirmed him in the certainty of Carloville's being alive, and that it was he himſelf who had applied for the Caſtle.

The ſound of the knocker rouſed Harwood from a thouſand melancholy projects he had rapidly formed in his own mind, to free her from the bondage of living with Carloville; when Caerleon and De Clerac returned with him whom they had been in purſuit of. It was ſome time before the agitation of Harwood's mind and ſpirits would ſuffer him to ſpeak; nor could he, when he made the attempt, articulate an intelligible ſentence.

Carloville, who entered the room with an unconcern that did honour

to

to his effrontery, prevented him from coming to any explanation with regard to Ethelreda, by aſking for her firſt himſelf.

Harwood, who was intently conſidering the wonderful alteration in his perſon, and his equally wonderful reſurrection, was ſome time before he anſwered: at laſt he ſaid, "Did you aſk *me*, ſir, for Mrs. Carloville?"

"For *Lady* Carloville, ſir; which amounts to the ſame thing. I left her with you; and of courſe with you I expect to find her, or to be immediately informed where ſhe is at preſent."

"I ſhall make no ſcruple of telling you, ſir, that, were I ſo fortunate as to know where ſhe is, I ſhould carefully conceal her," ſaid Harwood, diſcovering ſome ſymptoms of pleaſure and hope on his features, which this unexpected requiſition of Carloville occaſioned.

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"Mr. Harwood," replied he, "you will please to remember, I have the law on my side, which allows of no evasions:—I ask you for the last time, where I am to seek for Lady Carloville?"

"You lose your time with me, sir; I neither will nor can give you any account of her: but I rejoice sincerely in the possibility of her having withdrawn herself from the power of one who made no scruple to treat her, without the smallest provocation, with selfish barbarity: and so far from believing you suppose me capable of giving you any information, it has just occurred to me, your unfortunate victim may be at this moment in your power. I have already seen instances enough of your falsehood and duplicity, to authorize the suspicion."

"You have a great deal yet to learn of my character, if you think this shallow evasive answer will satisfy me," said

ſaid Carloville, the crimſon of his face taking a deeper tint. "I have no particular inclination to quarrel with you, Mr. Harwood, or to engage you in uſeleſs expence; but nothing that you can ſay will convince me I do not ſuſpect you with reaſon: the lady is miſſing; the only proof you can give of your ſincerity, provided you wiſh to avoid carrying things to extremity, is to allow me to advertiſe in your name."

"I care not for your menaces or your opinion, ſir," ſaid Harwood haughtily: "the leſs my name is joined with yours, the more for my honour. If Ethelreda is not already in your power, my name ſhall not be inſtrumental in drawing her from her concealment. If you have ſpoken the truth, your own name may be as efficacious as mine." Harwood haſtily and inſtantaneouſly quitted the houſe. He was im-

patient to return to Conway, in order to consult and advise with him, whether it were still expedient to continue their pursuit, or suffer Ethelreda to remain in her unknown concealment."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

Je ne la verrai plus—mais à d'autres attraits
Mon cœur, mon triste cœur, est fermé pour jamais.

VOLTAIRE.

If Harwood had entertained the slightest idea that the news of Carloville's existence so materially concerned Conway, he would certainly have concealed the whole account, or at least have told it with preparation and caution, that the first violence of the shock might in some measure lose its effect. But thinking on the contrary that Conway would be relieved from a load of dreadful suspicions, which he still harboured in spite of his friend's assurances, Harwood was in haste till

till he had communicated the ſtrange ſtory; nor did he immediately perceive the terrible detail had ſtupefied all his faculties, and that he ſtood looking at him with the vacant ſtare of one who ſees ſomething ſupernatural.

It was ſome time before Conway recovered his recollection; and then, inſtead of falling into wild ravings, and frantic exclamations, he uttered nothing but groans; and ſo entirely were his ſpirits depreſſed, that he had not courage to aſk one ſingle particular of the diſtreſſing relation.

Harwood, ſhocked and alarmed at the effect of his detail, and thinking the deſponding ſtate of Conway's mind required conſtant attention, was determined by fraud (for he knew no perſuaſions would avail) to prevail on him to ſet out with him for Liſbon, whither he was impatient to accompany his family; as any longer ſtay in London

don appeared to him needleſs, if Ethelreda were really in her huſband's power. And ſhould ſhe have eſcaped (which he partly hoped), he thought it moſt probable ſhe would fly to them, as being ſure of a defence and refuge with him and her ſiſter. He therefore made no ſcruple of concluding his narrative, by telling Conway that Ethelreda had fled from her huſband, and he had every reaſon to believe ſhe would ſhelter herſelf with them in Portugal.

Harwood prefaced this invention by ſaying, it would moſt probably be ſome time before ſhe ventured to diſcover herſelf even to them. He therefore was not ſurpriſed that Conway expreſſed but faint emotions of joy: on the contrary, he was pleaſed at it, as the exceſs of his diſappointment would only be the greater when the deluſion was known.

Conway however inſiſted on Harwood's

wood's departing alone, promiſing to follow by another route, in hopes of intercepting the fugitive; and accordingly the departure of each was fixed on for the next day, or the day after at fartheſt.

Caerleon, who with ſome reaſon, from the moment of Carloville's re-appearance, had dreaded falling under the imputation of having propagated a notorious falſehood, remained at Sir Francis L'Eſterling's, in order to draw from him, if poſſible, by means of the Count de Clerac, who was not ſparing of his queſtions, ſome reaſon for the report. But it was all to no purpoſe. Carloville turned an impenetrable ear to his hints: nor would he drop a ſyllable from which Caerleon could gather the motives of his conduct; nor would he relieve the impertinent curioſity of De Clerac by explaining how Lord Carloville and Colonel de

Winterfeldt happened to be one individual. But having reminded the latter of a trifling debt of ſome hundred louis, he took his departure, leaving them at liberty to gueſs and comment at their leiſure.

CHAP. XXX.

——I wish I could
Quit all offences with as clear excuse,
As well as I am doubtless I can purge
Myself of many I am charged withal.

SHAKESPEARE.

LORD Caerleon had scarcely quitted his own house with Mr. Harwood, when Lord Trecastle stopped at the door, and at the same time, in obedience to her Ladyship's pressing orders, Lady Caerleon's carriage; in attempting to reach which in all the majesty of resentful airs, she overlooked her father-in-law, and gave him so rude a shock as she passed him, that the good peer, who had scarcely recovered the use of his feet since a late fit of the gout, was

was nearly proſtrate in the hall. "Pſhaw!" cried he peeviſhly; not knowing at firſt what flouncing lady had treated him with ſo little ceremony.

"Oh my lord!—I beg your pardon," cried ſhe, ſtill going towards the door.

"What! fair Roſamond!"—Why, your ladyſhip has nearly made me loſe my centre of gravity; and nothing will reſtore the equilibrium but a moment's converſation, and ſome of thoſe ſmiles you uſed to excel in. This is the firſt viſit I have paid you in your own houſe, and the firſt I have made ſince my long confinement," ſaid the Earl, forgetting his offended foot with perfect good humour.—At the ſame time he preſented her a morocco caſe which he held in his hand.

Lady Caerleon gueſſed it contained jewels; and as ſhe knew Lord Trecaſtle's ſplendid ſpirit, ſhe gueſſed they

were

were magnificent. It was a ſevere trial to ſo pretty a woman as Lady Caerleon, to be obliged to forego ſuch an addition to her regalia: but ſhe was too angry not to make the ſacrifice; and with tears in her eyes ſhe told Lord Trecaſtle, "She was ſorry it was not in her power to ſtay in that houſe to entertain him; but at her brother's houſe, at Lord Beralſton's, ſhe ſhould always be happy to ſee him."

Lord Trecaſtle now began to perceive, by her tone and ruffled countenance, that ſomething had vexed her. In vain however he tried to conſole her, as he was equally unſucceſsful in all attempts to diſcover the cauſe. The more ſhe was coaxed and humoured, the more ſullen ſhe grew. At laſt Lord Trecaſtle aſked, with a ſmile, if Caerleon had offended her?

"Lord Caerleon," ſaid ſhe, "is too much taken up with his new idol, to pay

much

much attention to my anger or my approbation." With theſe words, and a ſlight bow to Lord Trecaſtle, ſhe placed herſelf in her carriage, and in a very determined tone ordered herſelf to be driven to Lord Beralſton's. Her brother, ſhe knew, was not at home; or ſhe would not have ventured to make ſo ridiculous an éclat.

As for Lord Trecaſtle, ſo far from thinking his new daughter, to whom he was extremely partial, either captious or petulant, he returned to his own houſe highly exaſperated againſt his ſon; of whom having heard from time to time little anecdotes of a ſimilar nature, he gave full credit to Lady Caerleon's innuendo, and full ſcope to his own reſentment.

At his return, Caerleon heard his lady was abſent, and that Lord Trecaſtle had been there; and gueſſing immediately what ſort of impreſſion the old lord had received, he haſtened to Groſvenor-ſquare to remove it before it had been ſtrengthened by time,

ſo

ſo as to become a part of his creed beyond the power of rhetoric and cajolery to remove.

When Caerleon ſhowed himſelf at the door of the room where Lord Trecaſtle was tranſacting buſineſs with his Strathener bailiff, he no ſooner caught a glimpſe of his ſon's perſon, than he ſaid in an angry tone, "Howel, tell that gentleman I am engaged."

Howel, with more obedience than manners, was going to ſhut the door in his face.

"Do you know *who I* am?" ſaid Caerleon, in a tone which he intended ſhould be very impoſing. Howel inſtantly drew back; and Caerleon advanced to the table, which was covered with bills and money to a large amount.

Lord Trecaſtle, whoſe rage had riſen to its higheſt pitch on ſeeing Caerleon ſo coolly countermand his orders, ſat down in his chair unable to ſpeak for paſſion, at the ſame time beckoning him to leave the room. Caerleon was

ſurpriſingly

ſurpriſingly ready at telling a lie for his own advantage; and knowing the national debt to be a ſyſtem in politics which his father could neither underſtand nor endure, he ſaid gravely, "I am not ſurpriſed at ſeeing your lordſhip ſo diſcompoſed: I ſuppoſe you have heard of the newly propoſed loan!"

"Another loan!" cried Lord Trecaſtle in aſtoniſhment, his anger inſtantly diverted to a new channel. "And where is the intereſt to come from?"

"Some abler financier than *I am* muſt determine," ſaid Caerleon.

"I proteſt this villainous national debt has coſt me more ſleepleſs nights than ever the gout did. I ſhall not cloſe my eyes for a week!"

"Tis an abominable thing to be in debt!" ſaid Caerleon, looking ſteadily at the money: "I believe I ſhould ſleep better, if it were not for a few trifles of that ſort, that hurt my feelings extremely."

"You

"You may put the money in your bag again, Howel," said Lord Trecastle, not choosing to comprehend his son's hint; or, more properly, wishing to put it out of his reach. But Caerleon, giving Howel a look which implied, "Do as *I* bid you," drew his chair still nearer, and, placing his whole arm and hand upon the bills, as if by accident, enquired if Lord Trecastle had heard the answer to the requisition made by our Court, to a certain great Northern Potentate, on the subject of an alliance supposed to be extremely inimical to the interests of a hitherto neutral state. "You comprehend me, my lord? I know not what the requisition can possibly be, but the capital was in a flame! The great princess was audibly heard to swear at a certain ambassador, who is returned full of resentment at the injury. It is shrewdly suspected," said he, lowering his voice, "she

"she gave him a box on the ear: but this must never be mentioned, as it is not known exactly whether it happened at Mon-Plaisir or Zarsco-zelo."

"Why, all this is very surprising! So I suppose they talk of an armament, and the loan is in consequence?"

"I imagine it must," said Caerleon. "But the small sum I mean to borrow of you" (grasping his hand full of all within his reach) "is intended to enable me to keep my stud, which otherwise I must dispose of."

"I am almost determined never to give you another shilling," said Lord Trecastle, half laughing at his son's dexterity. "But, however, tell me how much you have pillaged; and if I allow you to keep it, promise not to be so extravagant in future. I know you spent already, before you had an establishment, almost as much as I do!"

Caerleon was about to give an account of

of his ſpoils, when Mr. Conway walked ſtiffly into the room, with one eye fixed on his brother, and the other on his nephew. Caerleon, immediately gueſſing by the diſtribution of his uncle's glances that ſome formal complaint was going to be preferred, haſtily thruſt the unexpected acquiſition into his pocket, and, putting on one of his moſt defying countenances, eyed him in ſilence.

Mr. Conway, always one of the laſt to believe a ſtory when told, was of courſe one of the laſt to hear of Ethelreda's flight; though, in conſequence of the ſervant's report who brought an account of Captain Conway's madneſs, nothing elſe had been talked of by the domeſtics of his family; who, according to the ſurmiſes and hints with which in fact Conway himſelf in his rage had furniſhed them, ſaid confidently that Lord Caerleon had privately diſpoſed of her. The ſecretary, who was one of the earlieſt

informed

informed of the report, would willingly have repeated it again; but Mr. Conway had ſo many times cut him ſhort with league, convention, treaty of pacification, treaty of alliance, government, conſtitution, and the exigencies of the ſtate, it was with difficulty he could ſeize a moment when his patron's leiſure would allow him to hear the detail; which he had no ſooner done, than, blaming his ſecretary extremely for having delayed to give him information of ſo much importance, he poſted to Lord Trecaſtle's, in order to prevail on him to interpoſe his authority with Lord Caerleon, whom he looked upon as Conway's agent and abettor in this buſineſs, but whom he thought it more adviſable and more politic to treat as the principal aggreſſor.

"I am ſorry," ſaid Mr. Conway, addreſſing his brother—"I am very much diſtreſſed, Lord Trecaſtle, at being obliged—at being abſolutely forced—to make

make a complaint to you against one of your own family; but, really, a breach of morals so notorious—so flagrant an abuse of decorum—" looking at Lord Caerleon—" so——"

"Why, what has he done?" cried Lord Trecastle.

"My uncle thinks I have stolen something," said Caerleon in a calm undaunted tone.

"Yes, I *know* you have," repeated Mr. Conway. "You are the worst of robbers!"

"A robber!" cried the liberal Lord Trecastle. "Caerleon a robber!—Impossible!"

"He means the notes I have taken from you!" very dexterously whispered Caerleon to his father; then seizing his uncle's arm, he almost forcibly dragged him out of the room, and shut the door after them, in order to prevent Lord Trecastle from coming to any explanation.

"What do you mean, sir," said he, addressing

addreffing Mr Conway, "by making complaints of me to my father? And without foundation, too!—Every one is ftrangely prepoffeffed that *I* have fecreted Mrs. Carloville; but it is my opinion Captain Conway, if he would, could give you fuller information than any other perfon. I am grieved," continued he as he accompanied Mr. Conway to the door, "that I am too much engaged this morning to affift you in plaguing my coufin, which I divine to be your intention; having *myfelf* tolerable endowments that way, which joined to your fuperior talents, we might, perhaps, with a little exertion, drive Harry out of his fenfes!"

"I defire, Lord Caerleon, you will not run away with any falfe ideas of my intentions," faid Mr. Conway gravely. "I wifh to have it received that Captain Conway is perfectly his own mafter."

"Oh,

"Oh the unconſcionable cheat!—To dream of paſſing ſuch a palpable impoſition upon any thing but an ideot!" cried Caerleon, burſting with laughter, almoſt before he was out of hearing; enchanted at his own dexterity, and not ſorry for the opportunity he had given Conway's father to torment him, to whom he owed ſome malice for his reſerve.

As for Lord Trecaſtle, imagining Caerleon had only been ſhewing his uncle the door in reſentment for having called him robber in ſo unprovoked a manner, and for which he himſelf felt equal reſentment; he was too well pleaſed at the affronting manner in which, as he ſuppoſed, Caerleon had diſmiſſed his uncle, to require any further explanation; ſo that Caerleon effected the purpoſe of his viſit, by reinſtating himſelf in his father's good graces, without ever having come to the ſubject of his anger.

In

In the evening Lady Caerleon returned to her own house, where, as she had dismissed her airs, she was civilly received by her Lord; having very wisely considered, during her temporary separation, that, should Lord Caerleon and herself become the topic of public conversation, her part in the drama would appear both humiliating and ridiculous.

CHAP. XXXI.

In quella ferma voce,
In quell' aperta fronte,
In quel guardo ficuro, in quel fublimo
Intrepido parlar, chi d'innocenza,
Chi mai di verità tutti i piu grandi
Luminofi caratteri non vede?

METASTASIO.

THE difguifed conductor of Ethelreda fupported her from Sir Francis L'Efterling's houfe, 'till they reached the corner of the ftreet; then lifting her into a hackney-coach, he ordered the man to drive to Grofvenor-fquare. Ethelreda in the mean time was perfectly compofed, or rather fhe was perfectly filent. When the carriage ftopped, her companion afked if fhe chofe to walk or be carried into the houfe? She

She anſwered, ſhe was able to walk. Accordingly with ſome ſupport ſhe proceeded to the drawing room. The ſervant, though ſurpriſed at the alteration in her habit, concluded it was his miſtreſs, and of courſe ſtarted no kind of objection.

Carloville—for it was he—Carloville ſhut the door; then taking off his maſk, "I do not ſhew my face," ſaid he, "in order to identify myſelf, for I am convinced my perſon is too much altered for you to know it again; it is ſufficient however that you recognize my voice."

Ethelreda looked at him; then ſhutting her eyes, ſhe faintly uttered "Yes."

"Well! I am grown confounded ugly, that's certain," ſaid he; "I hope your ladyſhip has not been improving in the ſame manner." "Give me no title!" cried Ethelreda in a ſuffocated tone, "it never ſhall belong to me."

"Not quite ſo violent," ſaid he, con-

tracting his brows, and changing his tone of levity for a more serious one; "there is part of your conduct, faultless as you may think to appear, which requires an immediate explanation."

"I am ready to give it," said Ethelreda, acquiring more firmness as she recovered from the first terrible shock of surprise.

"Take off your mask then, that I may see whether your countenance and your invention have practised together."

Ethelreda obeyed instantly; and fixing her eyes on Carloville for two or three minutes, she looked as if she asked his severest scrutiny. He was evidently confused; he turned away his head in order to hide his embarrassment, and asked in a harsh tone, "Whom she had conversed with at the little gate of the myrtle-garden, the morning after Sir Francis's fête?"

"It was Captain Conway," said Ethelreda, apparently but not in reality undismayed

dismayed at the frightful and revengeful glare that accompanied his question.

"Your lover?"

"My husband."

"Your husband!" repeated Carloville. "You are amply provided for!" he added with a sneer. "Pray, how long is it since my *disconsolate* widow converted herself into another man's wife?"

His manner was particularly insulting; but Ethelreda answered, with all possible mildness, she was married that morning, and had not seen Conway since.

"Nor ever shall again," cried Carloville with a malignant smile; "but you will require bolts and bars, my dear!"

"I will solemnly promise never to see him again," said Ethelreda courageously, "provided you will agree to my disposing of myself out of your sight."

"Yes, yes, it is pretty clear you hate the sight of me; but I think you as

handsome as ever: so do not expect me to make any agreements to my own dishonour. I know how promises are kept after the turn is served. My *dear* wife, your reputation is too precious to me! Calumny is too apt to attack beautiful young girls, like you, who do not know their own minds, even *without* reason; but it is to be hoped, as I mean to be tolerably careful, whilst your person is in my custody, the censorious world will not slander it."

To doubt Ethelreda's word was a certain method of raising her anger. "I am sorry," said she warmly, "you have but one standard for truth and sincerity; that you judge me by yourself; I, who never yet either broke a promise, or practised a deception."

Carloville felt both the severity and the truth of the assertion; but it was by no means his intention that she should perceive it: he therefore pretended not

to have listened, and said carelessly, "Apropos, of money; have you received your legacy yet?"

She answered, she had not.

"Send to Jephson immediately; I must have a thousand at all events."

"Accede to my terms," said Ethelreda eagerly, "and you shall possess the whole."

Carlovalle again sternly refused.

Ethelreda had supported herself with hopes hitherto, and, amidst her anxiety to make her own terms with Carlovalle, the agony of mind which she endured was imperceptible almost to herself; but his inexorable manner made her fear she should not prevail, when it struck into her mind to make one desperate proposal, which still she dreaded he would reject—"The Castle of St. Siffrid," said she, "is to be let; confine me in any part of it, but promise never to see me, or to disclose——"

"And so become a jailor to all intents and purposes!" cried he, interrupting her. "A very rational scheme, but rather too troublesome! Devise another."

"I will provide my own jailor," said Ethelreda firmly; "old Llewellyn, who was present at my last marriage, and whose fidelity I could rely upon, though a price were set upon my head."

"You can depend on old Llewellyn!" repeated he thoughtfully: "he has a reputation for honesty, I suppose—there is a great deal in character;" and then, as if to shake off some unpleasant conviction, he added in a gayer tone, "Come, come, leave all this romantic folly, and send for the money: time wears."

"The money," said Ethelreda resolutely, "waits on your consent: if you refuse me, I will formally relinquish

it to your brother, as in fact I am no longer entitled to it."

"I have no intention of defrauding any one," said Carloville; "it will soon be in my power to refund what I shall oblige you to borrow for me; and though you treat me with scorn, I have no wish but to regain your good opinion, which an irresistible fatality has been the means of my losing."

"All retrospects must be as"—degrading, she was about to say—"painful as they are unavailing—let us not discuss them—I return to my proposal, which is final."

Carloville, now finding her indeed resolved and steady in purpose, tried to soothe and persuade her to give up so extraordinary a resolution: he represented to her, the step once taken, it was irrevocable, there would be no possibility of her returning to society, should her solitude and confinement

ment become ever so irksome and dreadful; "unless," he added, "you look forward to my death as a release, and that may prove a wearying prospect; though I confess, if any thing can cut me off in my prime, it will be to know it is your wish. If my heart is so stubborn as to hold out against my own remorse and your prayers, think of your youth; consider how many years of solitude and silence uninterrupted you have to exist; think of what you relinquish for ever—a gay adoring world, a splendid fortune, a title, every advantage that beauty and consequence bestow: and what will they not command?"

"Peace of mind, an approving conscience," said Ethelreda.

"Is yours then ill at ease?" said Carloville, trying to conceal his confusion. "Under this shew of innocence are you trying to shelter your-

 self

self from remorse? Is that the motive of concealment?"

"It would degrade me more to answer than to hear you," said Ethelreda with indignation; "solitude has no terrors but for the guilty."

"You hint, then, that *I* shall never try it?—Well, burthen your tender conscience with one fraud at least; cheat my brother of the legacy, and turn yourself over to everlasting repentance as soon as you please."

It was fortunate for Ethelreda that money was absolutely necessary to Carloville in the prosecution of his designs. Accordingly the lawyer was sent to, and the legacy and all the attendant business settled without further delay. It was not till they were alone that Ethelreda began to feel all the horrors of her fate. Her sufferings were too intense to be relieved by tears; and when Carloville once more wrapped her in

the fatal black domino, ſhe fainted, and did not recover her ſenſes or recollection, till the motion of a carriage helped to reſtore her to her miſeries.

They ſtopped at a houſe in an obſcure part of the town, where Carloville left Ethelreda, and returned to his own lodgings; intending to hire the Caſtle of Sir Francis L'Eſterling by letter, which under the preſent circumſtances he looked upon to be the very beſt expedient he could have deviſed, ſince a letter from Lord Carloville would have all the efficacy of a forged name, without being one in reality.

The manner thus ſettled, the tranſaction itſelf took up but very little time. Lord Carloville was an unexceptionable tenant; and Sir Francis, glad at all events to get rid of an incumbrance (for as ſuch he conſidered the Caſtle), ordered his ſteward to reply, and accept him immediately. Carloville

next

next proceeded to rid the house of all Harwood's servants, by writing to Llewellyn in Ethelreda's name to dismiss them—to remain there *himself* till he heard further from her—but to be particularly cautious not to mention her name, or to hint that she had written to him.

Every thing thus arranged according to Ethelreda's directions, Lord Carloville ventured, late in the third evening from her quitting Grosvenor-square, to call at the house where he had placed her, in order to settle the time and mode of her departure. He was shocked and alarmed beyond measure, when he heard from the people of the house, that she had been delirious the two first days since her arrival, that they had sent for a physician to attend her, and that she was now better, and sitting up in expectation of his arrival.

It had been previously resolved upon, that

that Carloville should return on the third night, if his scheme in hiring the Castle took effect; and notwithstanding her delirium, Ethelreda had not forgotten the agreement. Weak, and almost dying, she still adhered to her first resolution. She dreaded being discovered to Conway, through the attendance of her physician: she therefore no sooner beheld Carloville, than in a firm though languid tone she desired to leave the house, and that same evening commence her journey.

Carloville looked at her, and was struck with horror at the alteration of her countenance: he began to fear he should have her death to answer for, compared to which his other crimes appeared to him white as wool. He conjured her to lay aside her purpose; but she was not to be persuaded—she persisted wildly in her design, declaring the preservation

preservation of her senses depended on his compliance.

Carloville saw by her manner, that her determinations were not to be disputed; he therefore promised to return in half an hour, properly provided with every means to perform the journey secretly, and with expedition. He was not worse than his word. He seized a convenient opportunity of taking her out of the house unobserved by the people of it; a carriage waited at a small distance, in which he placed her, after leaving a bill enclosed in a note of thanks to the physician, and an adequate sum to indemnify the people for what expence and trouble they had been put to.

Ethelreda was no sooner seated in the carriage than she became more tranquil, and felt her spirits much relieved. She was no longer in danger of being constrained to live with Carloville; she was certain of never meeting

ing Conway to add to his sufferings by her own; and more than all, she hoped it would be some alleviation of them, for Conway to know that she had concealed herself for his sake. She hoped, too, to escape the censure and obloquy any other mode of conduct would unavoidably have drawn upon her; for she had resolved to encounter both poverty and disgrace, rather than live with Carloville for the future.

Her strength therefore returning, rather than declining, in this journey, is not unaccountable; she was inwardly persuaded she was pursuing the only course that could secure her from years of unabating misery.

Carloville, when they reached Bristol, in order to get undiscovered to the Castle, had determined to hire a skiff and land at once under the walls. He was considerably endowed with that sort of courage which is not bad-

ly distinguished by the name of fool-hardiness; consequently the known danger of the beach was in his opinion no impediment; and as a steady easterly wind promised him a speedy passage, he concluded himself, under the direction of an experienced pilot, in perfect safety. As for Ethelreda, though the danger was not unknown to her both from experience and report, she was content to run all hazards—nor did she make one single objection to being out a night in winter in a vessel but little better than an open boat. The darkness of the night was somewhat relieved by the dim light of the waning moon. Ethelreda, wrapped in a horseman's coat and a large slouched hat, which entirely concealed her person and her sex from the mariners, was now brought upon deck, and informed they had finished their destined voyage. Notwithstanding her courage and resolution, she suffered extremely

extremely from terror as well as intense cold; for their little vessel had repeatedly been in danger, from the large masses of ice that had floated down from the rivers, and occasioned much alarm amongst the seamen.

It was low water, and Ethelreda saw at a distance, by the assistance of the moon-beams that dimly shone upon the Castle, the embattled turrets of her intended prison, rendered more dreary in appearance by the snow that rested upon their roofs. As the seamen carried her through the shallow water, she looked towards that part of the beach where her life had once been saved by Conway; she clearly perceived the long ridge of rocks stretching into the sea, and, in the anguish of her heart, wished she had perished there.

Carloville supported her trembling steps along the rugged beach till they came to the gardens; it was with ex-

treme

treme difficulty, faint, cold and weak as she was, that, with his single assistance (for the sailors were returned to take care of their vessel), she ascended the numerous flights of steps, from one terrace to another, till at last they arrived, quite weary and exhausted, at the tower through which they were to gain admission to the hall. But the difficulty of obtaining a peaceable entrance was not inconsiderable. The horn that age after age had been blown by barons, knights and heralds, was still chained to the gate. Sir Roger, like his ancestors, knew the use of no other bells in the Castle but alarm bells, and to Harwood all his peculiarities were sacred.

Carloville would willingly have avoided the noise, lest any of the servants besides Llewellyn should still remain in the Castle; but there was no alternative: so, applying the horn to his lips,

he

he ſent forth a blaſt that inſtantly awakened Llewellyn and his wiſe, who in fact were the only living *human* creatures within its walls. There was no neceſſity to repeat the ſtrain; for the owls both within and without, by their clamorous hootings, helped to diſpel Llewellyn's ſlumbers, who awoke with his head full of ſuperſtitious tales of chivalry, and traditionary ſtories of the L'Eſterling family. He at once concluded that Sir Roger, like ſome of his predeceſſors, was ſurveying the outworks of his Caſtle, to which vigilant cuſtom of its deceaſed poſſeſſors the undecaying ſtate of the Caſtle was attributed. The ſingle blaſt of the horn confirmed Llewellyn in the truth of his ſurmiſes, as Sir Roger in his lifetime was never known to ſound a ſecond time—in token of the ready obedience he expected from his vaſſals in the diſcharge of their duty. Llewellyn, who had ſerved his maſter

master in his life with scrupulous exactness, was determined not to be deficient in this last point of duty; he therefore rose instantly, and descended to the portal, followed by Winifred, whose fears would not suffer her to remain behind. As Llewellyn walked through the hall, he unhitched a rusty pike from the armour-racks, to be provided against a surprise: at all events, the ghost of his master he imagined would not be displeased to see him so cautious. Then boldly opening the door, he beheld—not the ghost of Sir Roger dressed in the complete suit of armour which was hung up in the church of St. Siffrid, and by tradition worn by all the aërial visitants upon these occasions—but two people in slouched hats and great coats!

Llewellyn, concluding by their garb they were people of this world, and not the spirits of the departed, attempted to shut the door rudely in their faces; but

Carloville

Carloville prevented him by applying his hand to it; and calling out to him, "Llewellyn! it is your mistress," he speedily gained an entrance into the hall.

Ethelreda now attempted to speak, in order to convince him it was herself; and Carloville, taking off her hat and turning her pale face to the moon-light, presented indeed the features of Ethelreda to the remembrance of the astonished Llewellyn and Winifred—but so wan and altered, that they both cried out it was a vision, and fled from the sight into the great kitchen, where the dying light of a large wood fire indistinctly shewed them the two ghosts following. Their terror, however, subsided on seeing Carloville offer Ethelreda some bread, part of the remains of their own supper, which stood upon a table; and when she asked for a little water, Winifred ventured to approach her with it, and to touch her hand, which Ethelreda held out in order

to

to convince her of her earthly existence.

Both Llewellyn and Winifred had been accustomed to keep a distance as respectful as to sovereigns, towards Sir Roger and his family. And though they perceived and guessed that something extraordinary had happened to their mistress, not even their looks, which were earnestly fixed on Ethelreda, had bestowed the slightest tokens of curiosity; neither had Carloville resolved in what way to speak to the servants. He was unwilling to trust them, and vexed to the heart that he had been prevailed on to comply with Ethelreda's extraordinary proposal; but it was now too late to make use of force, and fair means had already been tried in vain.

During the half-hour's profound silence which the whole group preserved, numberless revolutions passed in the mind of Ethelreda; she had thought to make one

one more essay upon the feelings and humanity of Carloville, and endeavour to prevail on him to allow her some less dreadful prison than her paternal mansion. She thought too, as she cast her eyes towards the faithful and venerable Llewellyn, that there was a degree of barbarity unobserved before, in making him her jailor, more insupportable than all. She was repeatedly on the point of hazarding some new proposal, but her spirits were too much weakened to suffer her to expose herself to the harshness of a refusal; and she remained silent, in expectation of hearing Carloville give her in charge to Llewellyn.

In the confusion and anxiety of Llewellyn's mind, some faint ideas of Carloville's figure had struck him, though he was considerably altered both in size and person. He was conscious the man before him was not unknown to him, though his name and his connection with

the

the L'Esterling family he had totally forgotten. In vain he tried to develop his own thoughts; from time to time he looked at Winifred, and at his mistress: at last fancying she spoke to him, he ventured to say, "Madam?"

"I did not speak, Llewellyn;" said Ethelreda faintly, and shuddering with apprehensions at what was to follow.

"I wish you would then!" said Carloville impatiently; "it will soon be morning, and perhaps you had rather return with me?"

"Oh no!" cried Ethelreda, springing towards the door; "follow me, Llewellin, instantly!"—

Llewellyn, hastily snatching up a dimly burning candle, obeyed immediately, and advancing some steps before his mistress, who pointed across the hall, he solemnly and slowly marched along, followed by Carloville; and Winifred, fearful of

being left alone, with hesitation, lest she should offend, ventured to attend her.

Carloville, in spite of his hitherto unfeeling conduct, could not see Ethelreda devoting herself to perpetual imprisonment without shuddering. Though he wished to speak for the last time, and try if it were yet possible to prevail on her to give up so melancholy a scheme, he could not persuade himself that it would not be degrading in the eye of the world to submit to her terms; and more than all, with the suspicious distrust of wickedness and imposition, he thought he could not trust to the honour of a woman whom he had so deeply wronged—and who, he concluded, according to his own system of retribution, would not regard herself to be revenged on him.

Whilst Carloville made these reflections without coming to any resolution, the hollow echo of their slow footsteps as they

wound

wound along the narrow paſſages, added a ſolemnity to their proceſſion that ſeemed to impede his ſpeaking; one bat after another flitted by his head as he followed the ruſh candle that diſturbed them from their haunts, though almoſt obſcured by the thick damp vapours that filled the paſſages; the wind whiſtled in low murmurs through the vaulted roofs, and Ethelreda's deep and half-ſuppreſſed ſighs reverberated on his ear like the knell of her funeral. Still, however, he maintained a profound ſilence. Moment after moment he expected to ſee Ethelreda turn back with horror from the dreary proſpect. He thought it impoſſible ſhe ſhould poſſeſs more courage than he did, and more than once he was tempted to return; but ſtill ſhe pointed through long galleries and duſty ſuites of rooms till their way was impeded by a door, which Llewellyn opened, and they found themſelves in the library.

By this time Carloville had loſt all power of ſpeaking, at ſeeing Ethelreda ſo reſolute and ſo firm. She ſtood ſome moments at the door; the reſt hung back, except Llewellyn, who ſtill went forward with his light. At the farther end of the room ſtood a high antique reading-deſk, upon which was placed a large bible in the black letter; where it had remained ſince the days of Sir Roger, who, in imitation of his pious anceſtors, made it his principal ſtudy.

Ethelreda approached the deſk with awe and reverence, and kneeling upon the velvet cuſhion, where her fathers heretofore had performed their matins and veſpers, ſhe remained with her head upon her hands for near a quarter of an hour; whilſt Carloville, unuſed to ſuch ſcenes, waited with increaſing aſtoniſhment till Ethelreda roſe from her knees, and, cloſing the bible, which ſhe in vain attempted to lift, aſked Llewellyn,

wellyn, if he should object to taking a solemn oath.

Llewellyn placed his candle on the desk, and, approaching the bible, which he opened, had no sooner looked intently on the first verse, than, perceiving it was in English, he declared he could swear by no bible but a Welch one. His manner was so simple, yet so decided, that Carloville, in spite of the seriousness of all around him, speedily recovering the natural levity of his disposition, which the silence and solemnity of the scene had suppressed, burst into a loud and unceremonious laugh.

A sound so extraordinary startled Llewellyn, and roused Ethelreda from the stupor in which this unexpected difficulty had plunged her. Though nothing could be easier than to procure a Welch bible, Ethelreda's mind was so weakened, that this little obstacle appeared to her

the overthrow of all her hopes—and Carloville's laugh, insult and mockery.

"Is there any thing diverting or ridiculous in my proposal?" said she.

"Both!" cried Carloville, attempting a gay manner: "your proposals and your actions are equally diverting; and old Llewellyn is quite farcical. If swearing be your plan, why not swear by this little book?" taking a volume from the shelf: "'tis not half so heavy as the large one, 'tis true; but you may make up the deficiency in your oath, and of course it will be more binding."

Llewellyn and Winifred both started in horror at his profaneness; and Ethelreda, exasperated at his unfeeling levity, with her former spirit and an unusual tone of authority said, "You, sir, have no regard to oaths! But men of integrity, like Llewellyn, on all occasions are to be trusted on their bare word, at least by

me:

me: an oath they do not mention without reverence: I only proposed one for *your* particular satisfaction."

Lord Carloville felt his own humiliating inferiority too forcibly at first to express his anger. Shame and rage prevented him from speaking, or looking at Llewellyn and his mistress for some moments: at last he exclaimed, "I am glad you have told me your real opinion. I will be complaisant enough to prove to you that it is by no means erroneous; all oaths made to you I am determined to look upon as mere words of course—no power upon earth shall prevent me now from taking you back to London with me; I do not *swear* it, but you shall find for once that my bare word is as good as—" Carloville did not finish his sentence with a comparison so degrading to himself.

Ethelreda had scarcely uttered the rash sentence than she repented it, and, dropping on her knees, lifted up her hands

hands in a ſupplicating manner. Carloville did not give her time to ſpeak, but, catching her in his arms, was about to carry her out of the library. She ſcreamed faintly—and Llewellyn inſtantly attempting to reſcue her from this ſtill to him unknown ruffian, either by chance or deſign threw down the candle, and involved them all in utter darkneſs. Carloville, placing Ethelreda on the floor, called out to Llewellyn to lead the way to the door. He had a violent horror of ſpending the night there in intenſe cold and darkneſs; and fearful that Llewellyn ſhould avail himſelf of his inability to follow, he ſuppreſſed the long ſtring of maledictions he had ready on his tongue to beſtow on his awkwardneſs or malice; and after informing him, as a means of raiſing his compaſſion, that his miſtreſs was in a fainting fit (as from her extreme ſtillneſs Llewellyn himſelf concluded), and entreating the aſſiſtance of his hand, Carloville

Carloville at last found himself in the kitchen, where some remains of the fire still continued to burn.

At Carloville's desire, Llewellyn, lighting another candle, returned alone to assist Ethelreda, leaving Winifred in the kitchen. After a short absence, he again returned with his candle blown out, declaring, unless the others accompanied him each with candles, there was no chance of their reaching Ethelreda with a light. Thus circumstanced, Carloville, though reluctantly, was constrained to leave the fire; and they once more trod the long galleries, and arrived at the library.

In vain they looked on all sides for Ethelreda; she was not there—they knew they had not passed her in the galleries—there was no escape but from the windows, and these, at a great height from the ground, seemed to threaten certain death to whoever should attempt them. Their consternation was excessive. Llewellyn

 groaned,

groaned, but ſaid not a ſyllable. Winifred wept and ſobbed, and ran over every place where ſhe knew it was impoſſible ſhe could have gone, and lamented her ſuppoſed terror and diſtreſs at wandering alone and in the dark: at laſt ſhe concluded ſhe muſt have followed them, and loſt herſelf by turning up the ſtairs of the little tower at the end of the gallery on the right hand. Carloville, as they returned, called aloud, Ethelreda! The name ſounded in hollow murmurs through the roofs, and was returned again to his ear, accompanied by the owl and the cricket. He concluded ſhe had eſcaped him in the intricate turnings of the galleries, and that ſhe meant to conceal herſelf till ſhe could get out of his power; but ſince he knew ſhe muſt as yet be in the Caſtle, he was reſolved ſhe ſhould not elude his vigilance. In the little tower they looked in vain: in vain they went through every apartment, and ſearched every re-

ceſs,

cess, tower, and even large chest; when going down a flight of stairs in the left wing of the Castle, at the bottom of which was a door leading into the court, Llewellyn exclaimed it was unbolted, and that there she must have escaped whilst he returned to re-light his candle. Carloville instantly opened it, and ran a few paces into the court, and then returned to examine the snow; but his own footsteps had destroyed its smooth surface, and, unable to distinguish exactly whether any other track had been left, he still retained his uncertainty. There was in effect no other mode of accounting for her disappearance; and Carloville, knowing her to be totally destitute of money, and thinking it impossible she could, thus circumstanced, leave the neighbourhood of the Castle, or remain long in it undiscovered, gave up all idea of a search that night, in which he could only suppose Llewellyn would mislead him. It

would too have materially interfered with his plan of returning with the tide as secretly as he came, with an intention of coming openly in a few days to take possession of the Castle.

Therefore, after having told the petrified Llewellyn who he was, and after having given some menacing charges not to secrete his wife upon the peril of the law, he obliged both him and Winifred to swear never to divulge what had passed in their presence; and towards five in the morning he once more embarked with the apprehension of a more dangerous voyage than that he had already made, which, notwithstanding the rising of the wind, and the increased roughness of the sea, he performed safely—and without having raised any other suspicions amongst the mariners, than that he and the companion whom he had left behind were smugglers.

CHAP. XXXII.

——there's no art
To find the mind's conſtruction in the face.
SHAKESPEARE.

CARLOVILLE loſt no time on the road in his return to London. As he drew near, he felt ſome kind of perplexity at the idea of encountering Harwood, whom he imagined in all probability he ſhould meet; and even the thought of ſeeing Sir Francis L'Eſterling under the awkward circumſtances of having a few lies to tell, and a few falſe explanations to make, with an unvarying countenance, made him feel a kind of embarraſſment extremely unpleaſant, and to which he had never been ſubject. At the ſame time he was very far from ſuſpecting he was aſhamed of himſelf.

On

On the night of his arrival he could come to no resolution: however, towards morning (for he slept but little) a scheme occurred to him, which appeared so extremely plausible, he delayed not to put it in execution as soon as he had breakfasted. It was the application to Sir Francis L'Esterling for information of Lady Carloville's abode, which succeeded so completely in perplexing him, and misleading Harwood as to Ethelreda's real destiny. When Sir Francis last saw Carloville, which was only for the second or third time in his life (for he had been discarded by Lord Trecastle, as Lady Mariamne's lover, before Sir Francis thought of preferring his suit), his figure, a little above middle size, though rather inclining to corpulent, was far from inelegant, and his face what is usually termed handsome, but upon the whole what physiognomists would

would have pronounced a bad countenance; and though near thirty years old, his light hair and fair complexion usually made him pass for twenty-five. He had now entirely lost his youthful look, his face evidently exhibited tokens of hard drinking, and the increased dimensions of his person made him reasonably be taken for a man of forty. It was not therefore to be wondered at that he appeared to Sir Francis an utter stranger; nor would the matter have been elucidated, but for the accidental meeting of De Clerac, by whose means, and Caerleon's, the conference with Harwood took place, and the consequent explanation; for every circumstance concerning him, except those that the public papers had detailed, remained a profound secret, though entrusted to a *woman!* for Carloville had made but one confidant, to whom, though injudiciously chosen, and more from necessity than prudence, he was determined

termined to adhere. It was no other than Lady Mariamne L'Esterling.

When Carloville, after the death of Sir Roger, discovered he had married a portionless wife; he resolved privately to make his escape to the Continent, in order to avoid the clamour of his creditors, and the certainty of a prison. He was too well acquainted with the steady temper of his father, to hope any thing from him for the present or in future; his marriage, he knew, as it involved an innocent and amiable person in his deserved chastisements, would rather irritate his anger, than soothe him to forgiveness; he therefore never gave his family any intimation of his connection with the L'Esterlings, and consequently arose the apparent neglect with which Ethelreda was treated by the family of Carloville; who, though he had every reason to believe he was disinherited of every alienable part of his

 father's

father's property, by much the most considerable, yet as he was not absolutely certain of this latter point, he knew any fresh outrage on his part would certainly determine his fate. In the mean time, he hoped his father's declining health and weakened spirits would ward off his purpose till the whole was determined.

Having weighed all these circumstances in his mind, and as self was always predominant with him, he took his measures accordingly. His design was to become one in a gaming association—combinations of robbers that at that time abounded on the Continent—that he might not be without resources when the price of his commission was exhausted. But first, as a preliminary of consequence, he took the precaution to change his name, and with the assumed one of De Winterfeldt, and the uniform of a German officer, spent his time very profitably.

fitably. It was in these societies that from time to time he met with the Count de Clerac-Auxerre, whom he pillaged without mercy; and in consequence of the formerly-related quarrel with Lord Caerleon, he was wounded, and left for dead.

He fainted from the bleeding of his wound, but the cold air of the night speedily recovered him; and finding his hurt but trifling, he immediately thought of returning to his lodgings. It is certain no man was ever more artful, or possessed a readier invention, than Carloville. He no longer smarted under the pain of his wound, for his fertile imagination had already converted the accident to his advantage. Having furnished himself with all the money he possessed, which amounted to a pretty considerable sum, he stopped at the house of a surgeon, got his arm dressed, went post to Ostend, and crossed in the same

packet with Lord Caerleon; though each was too much disguised, and too careful of himself, to discover the other. Carloville's first care on his arrival was to send the before-mentioned paragraph concerning his death to the printer. The advantages he expected to derive from this new artifice were not inconsiderable. In the first place, the story of his death, which no one could disprove, and which Lord Caerleon at any rate would look upon as certain, would set aside the necessity of a will in his brother's favour, which he knew his father either had or intended making; and though William Carloville would at first inherit as heir, yet there would be no difficulty in making his appearance whenever it was necessary; and if, as he hoped, his supposed death set aside the intention of making a will in his brother's favour, he might *then* come into full possession of *all* his estates, without any troublesome

troublesome incumbrances for his brother's maintenance, whose poverty, he hoped, would stimulate him to shine in his profession of the law. And lastly, with a suspicion natural to him, having taken it into his head that Ethelreda had sums concealed unknown to him, he concluded, if his plot failed in the first instance, it would succeed in the last; for, as his supposed death would preclude the necessity of any longer concealment, it would be in his power to seize on this imaginary property with law and right on his side.

Yet days and weeks rolled on. Carloville saw his ill-gotten gains decline apace, and still Ethelreda was living in dependence in the family of Harwood. Slightly as he knew her, yet he was too well convinced of her spirit to suppose any other situation was in her power; he therefore owned to himself with grief, that this advantage had been falsely

estimated.

estimated. Still too the unhappy Lord Carloville lingered out a life of suffering. In vain his considerate son, unused to pray for himself, begged his speedy release. Poverty, which he had hitherto shunned by peculation and crimes, now stared him in the face, and he was reduced to the necessity of submitting to the dreaded evil, or of giving up all his bright dreams of the future, by returning to his old occupation of gamester.

Thus perplexed with present horrors and future hopes, Carloville could come to no resolution whilst a few pounds remained in his possession; when the far-famed gala which Sir Francis had in agitation suggested a desperate expedient to the subtle Carloville. Having calculated the expences of a journey into Wales, he expended all the overplus in a masquerade habit, and, on the appointed day, arrived at Kilgaren-hall, where he soon

ſoon found a convenient opportunity of introducing himſelf to Lady Mariamne.

A man with a ſmaller ſhare of effrontery and leſs art would have deſpaired of ſucceſs on ſuch an occaſion; nor indeed would he have dared to riſk his whole plot upon the reception he ſhould meet from a woman whom he had highly exaſperated, and who conſidered herſelf as injured and affronted. But Carloville, who was thoroughly convinced of her former partiality, and was no ſtranger to the paſſionate jealouſy of her temper, made light of every obſtacle, and, founding his chief hope upon his own ſkill in flattery, and the above-mentioned preference, already reckoned upon her money and her ſilence. His vanity would not ſuffer him to acknowledge, even to himſelf, that her hatred of Ethelreda, and her threats of revenge when firſt ſhe heard of his marriage, were more powerful advocates in favour of his pro-

jects

jects than any influence he could now boast.

Having fortified himself to bear whole torrents of reproaches and floods of anger, he followed Lady Mariamne, who wore no mask, into all the most retired parts of the gardens, to procure himself an opportunity of speaking to her. His assiduity had not escaped her notice; and having her full share of curiosity, she at last walked slowly to the house, and was followed by Carloville into one of the rooms, where no preparations had been made for the company. Carloville with uncommon adroitness began by reproaching her with her marriage; lamented his own misery with so much volubility, and involved her in so much perplexity and astonishment when he concluded by calling himself the ruined unhappy Carloville, that for the space of ten minutes he escaped the thunder

thunder of invectives collecting on the tongue of the amazed lady.

"How," cried ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe could ſpeak, "do you dare to inſult me here? faithleſs and mercenary as you are!"

"Mercenary!—mercenary!" repeated Carloville: "Ah, Lady Mariamne! Are you not miſtreſs of ten thouſand a-year?"

"And what induced me to marry Sir Francis," cried ſhe, exaſperated to the laſt degree, "but your perfidy?"

"I tell you again, deareſt Lady Mariamne! nothing but Sir Francis's certain aſſurances of ſucceſs could have prevailed on me to relinquiſh you but with my life; but when not only your family, but you, withdrew your countenance——"

"If Sir Francis—if he has miſled me," ſaid the credulous Lady with a

choked

choked utterance—" I am too unfortunate!"

" I came for no other purpose," continued Carloville, " than to see you once more. It was impossible to resist the desire of speaking to you—to hear the sound of your voice for the last time, though it were to see you exulting in my misfortunes; I will not conceal them from you. You see me reduced to poverty; but of that I do not complain; my wretchedness is the effect of your cruel desertion."

With such artful speeches having calmed the rage of Lady Marianne, Carloville imparted his schemes to her; explained the advantages he expected to reap from his supposed death; and, as he said, relying on the noble generosity of her temper, ventured to ask her silence and assistance.

The latter she was rather unwilling to afford him; but finding he was not ill

disposed to believe a thousand malicious hints against the character of Ethelreda, which she had invented, she was at last prevailed on to trust him with a considerable sum, in hopes she was laying the foundation of Ethelreda's humiliation and misery; particularly as, on the falsehoods she had whispered, Carloville artfully mentioned the word divorce; not that he believed a syllable to the prejudice of Ethelreda, and less from any confidence in her virtue—for he was not apt to trust any one—than from the knowledge he had of Lady Mariamne's malice and love of invention. He was however charmed with his own ingenuity, which had exculpated himself, imposed on the lady, laid the whole blame on Sir Francis, and procured him a pocket-book full of bank-notes—the sole end and purpose of his errand.

As for Lady Mariamne, she was bent on taking the first opportunity of revenging

venging herself on Sir Francis, for having ſo artfully, as ſhe thought, ſupplanted her firſt lover; and knowing nothing could touch him ſo nearly as the bouleverſement of his fête, ſhe played off that ſucceſsful hyſteric fit, which afforded her ſo fair an opportunity of ſeparating from her huſband, and of joining her colleague in London:—whilſt Sir Francis, totally innocent of all that Carloville had laid to his charge, ſince his acquaintance did not commence till Carloville's had ended, was the firſt ſufferer in conſequence of this extraordinary coalition.

During this eventful evening Carloville had beſtowed ſome ſhare of his watching, as well as of his admiration, on his wife; he was not a little chagrined at ſeeing her depart with a handſome young man, whoſe perſon was unknown to him.

It was ſometime before he could procure a carriage to follow them; and

owing to their speed, and his delay, he did not arrive till after the marriage of Conway and Ethelreda, and discovered them at the gate of the myrtle-garden just as Conway was departing. The posture of his schemes would not allow him to discover himself at that moment, though an appearance so suspicious gave credit to all Lady Mariamne's insinuations, and prompted him to lose no time in revenging the imaginary injury. But, circumstanced as he was, and preferring the accommodations which money can procure to every other consideration, he postponed his anger till he could make sure of his victims without any detriment to himself, personal or impersonal; and having thus commodiously arranged his resentment, he made an undiscovered retreat to London.

In about two months after this event, Carloville, by means of the public papers, received tidings of his father's decease.

Owing to the proving and registering of the will, his suspense was still prolonged some days; but he was amply repaid for all his sufferings of mind, upon finding no legacy of consequence mentioned in it, but the one to Mrs. Carloville, with a number of trifling ones to servants; but neither his own name nor his brother's was inserted, though blanks were left which had never been filled up. The date was not a very late one; so that it was doubtful what names were originally intended. The codicil in which the fatal legacy was made, was evidently a very late addition; from which Carloville concluded his stratagem had answered his most sanguine expectations. There now remained but one motive for concealment. Ethelreda was still at liberty. It was therefore agreed between Carloville and his confidante, that nothing should transpire till she was in his power; and having once secured her person, and the

the important legacy, it would not be difficult for him to install himself in all his honours, dignities, and estates. Twenty thousand pounds, he thought, would identify any man's person, should his brother think proper to question his; which, from the complete alteration it had undergone, judging from the corruption of his own heart, he thought by no means improbable.

From Lady Octavia, Mrs. Carloville's arrival was immediately known to Lady Mariamne, who without loss of time communicated the important information to her confederate. The report of her being near dying, raised a momentary joy in the bosom of Lady Mariamne, when she thought Lord Carloville would be at liberty; but she soon recollected such an event could be of no consequence to her. The reflection was not calculated to restore Sir Francis to her Ladyship's good graces. It was therefore merely

merely to ſerve her own purpoſes that ſhe made a ſhow of reconciliation, by accepting the invitation to the bal maſqué; for Carloville having called in the morning in Groſvenor-ſquare, and having been refuſed admittance under the pretence that Mrs. Carloville was not at home, it immediately occurred to Lady Mariamne that the whole was a ſtratagem. She inſtantly ſurmiſed ſome intended appointment; and as ſhe poſſeſſed by much the moſt Machiavelian abilities of the whole Conway family, ſhe with equal dexterity and ſucceſs deviſed the note which was to operate on the weak ſilly mind of Octavia, and which eventually drew Ethelreda into their toils.

CHAP. XXXIII.

——a little wight
Of wither'd aſpect; but his eye was keen,
With ſweetneſs mix'd—
He crept along, unpromiſing of mien.
Groſs he who judges ſo. His ſoul was fair,
Bright as the children of yon azure ſheen;
True comelineſs, which nothing can impair,
Dwells in the mind—all elſe is vanity and glare.

THOMSON.

MR. Conway, having been confirmed in all his ſurmiſes by his nephew, immediately went to Captain Conway's lodgings. He was vexed, but not much ſurpriſed, to hear he had not been ſeen there for many days. He began to have ſome fears as to the event of his ſearch, and to apprehend that Conway had concealed himſelf as well as Ethel-

 reda—

reda—when it occurred to him very juſtly, that the only mode of proceeding with any ſucceſs would be to acquaint Mr. Harwood with what he ſuſpected; and, ignorant of Harwood's being in London, he went to Sir Francis L'Eſterling's in order to procure himſelf the neceſſary information towards effecting his purpoſe. From Sir Francis, who could talk of nothing but the ſtrange event that had juſt happened in his family, Mr. Conway heard the ſtory of Carloville's return, of Ethelreda's ſeparation from her family, and of Harwood's arrival in London. Such a train of circumſtances were not calculated to remove Mr. Conway's ſuſpicions of his ſon and Ethelreda, particularly as he found upon enquiry that Sir Francis had ſeen nothing of him ſince the night of the maſquerade: he therefore returned to his own houſe, to deviſe ſome plan of diſcovering his ſon's retreat, and, if poſſible,

sible, of securing his person, upon some pretence or other.

In the mean time Harwood, whose impatience to be gone increased in proportion as the necessity of his stay in London decreased, having received a promise from Conway that he would follow him with all possible speed, took his departure in the morning long before day-light.

Conway, whose pride would not suffer him to confess to Harwood the straitened state of his finances, was upon this last account obliged to postpone his journey for some hours, in expectation of an answer to a note he had reluctantly written to his mother, requesting her assistance, and informing her of his intended excursion. This note was unfortunately given into Mr. Conway's hands, who himself carried it to his lady; and having waited till she had read it, upon the presumption it was from

from his son, he requested to be allowed the same liberty. The note contained all the information Mr. Conway had been in want of, namely, the place of his abode; he perceived too that Conway was in want of money, and he knew him to be in debt: all circumstances concurring to favour his designs. Having therefore told Mrs. Conway that he himself would answer the note (by which she apprehended, as he intended she should, that he would supply Conway with the sum he had asked for), he departed in order to put his tyrannical and cruel measures into execution.

It grew late in the day however, and Conway waited in anxiety for some answer to his note, impatient to depart, yet dreading to see Ethelreda, since he knew it must be for the last time. The expected answer however did not arrive; and Conway, surprised extremely at the delay, and vexed at what in his petulance

lance appeared to him his mother's coolneſs, departed from the reſolution he had made not to go to his father's houſe; but concluding he ſhould only ſee his mother for a moment, towards evening he went out alone, intending to go to Portman-ſquare.

He had ſcarcely walked a ſtreet's length, when he was rather rudely ſtopped by a man, who aſked if he were not Captain Conway?—Conway ſaid, "Yes!" without beſtowing a look on the enquirer; and was walking on, when another ill-looking fellow, placing himſelf in his way, told him as civilly as he could that he had a writ againſt him.

Such an interruption, ſo unexpected yet ſo deciſive, was a thunder-ſtroke to Conway. For the ſpace of a moment or two he ſtood immoveable in the ſame ſpot without endeavouring to eſcape, though he was ſufficiently powerful to cope with either or both of his antagoniſts;

nists; but such an idea never entered his head. To have recourse to his father was the first thought that struck him; and not till then did he feel in its full extent the extreme rashness and folly he had been guilty of, in quarrelling with him so irretrievably, to whom, notwithstanding the scanty allowance that reduced him to the necessity in former exigences of a similar nature, he had never made an unsuccessful application. He for the first time began to think it would not have been so degrading to have temporized as he had hitherto considered it, particularly as his situation at their last conference allowed of no other mode of preserving his favour. But he had lost the opportunity, and it was now too late, had he been inclined, to sacrifice his highly prized sincerity to interest. He reluctantly and for a moment thought of Lord Beralston, who he knew would instantly have released him;

him; but the idea of obligation was so repugnant, that he felt no disappointment when he recollected his friend's absence from London.

The two bailiffs, who had repeated the question, "Should they call a coach?" roused him from his momentary reverie; and the last expedient, which to have been effectual should have been the first, occurred to him, that of making his escape. It was the only time Conway's mind had ever suggested to him a dishonourable intention; and even now, though it presented itself without the smallest idea of fraud, he would have rejected it with scorn, had not the certainty of never seeing Ethelreda again been annexed to the determination. He glanced his eyes rapidly round him to observe which side was most favourable to his retreat, when he perceived himself on all sides surrounded: every passenger had stood to look at him, as the lamps clearly

clearly showed his fine person and elegant appearance, which, together with his agitation, and his two attendants, made him an object of curiosity. Shame, if it were possible, added to his despair and anguish; and dreading lest his situation should become more public, he surrendered himself to the officers, relinquishing, with a groan he could not suppress, all hopes of Ethelreda for ever. Amidst the condolence of the mob, which seemed to hint its connivance at his escape, should he attempt it, by lamenting that so fine a young man should fall into such hands, Conway placed himself in a coach, too much stupefied and overwhelmed with the complicated misery of his situation, to attend to or comprehend the good-natured but lawless insinuation of the crowd that would willingly have rescued him.

It had cost Mr. Conway's pride many severe struggles before he could resolve

upon

upon measures so degrading; but though a politician, and of course fertile in stratagems, it was the only effective one that presented itself to his imagination. The want of money alone he looked upon as a very inconsiderable bar to the purposes of a man so determined as Conway; and whose known consequence and connections would at any time procure it for him, had he been disposed to make use of them. But to prevent him from seeing Ethelreda he was resolved; and since every consideration appeared to him trifling compared to that, he overlooked the indignity he offered *himself* in causing his son to be arrested.

The success of his project however was no sooner communicated to Mr. Conway, than he began to repent it had been carried into execution; as, from the account of the bailiffs, strongly corresponding with that he received a few nights

nights before from Mr. Harwood's servant, and to which he had so sagaciously refused to give credit, he began to believe his unfortunate son was actually deranged in his intellects; and this idea, joined to his own harshness, had nearly produced the same effect upon himself. Mrs. Conway, too, whose reproaches he deservedly dreaded, though he longed to ask her attendance for her son, he knew not how to inform of his deplorable situation. Without coming to any resolution, he passed the whole night in walking his room, in an agitation of mind little short of distraction; whilst Conway, actually raving with his disappointment, which had at first stupefied him, furnished his jailor, and with some probability, with additional proofs of his madness; which being communicated to Mr. Conway in the morning, left him without any alternative but that of keeping him confined, since

ſince his releaſe muſt proclaim his ſituation to Mrs. Conway and to the world.

Mr. Conway's ſufferings, though ſevere, were not greater than he deſerved. The ſenſe of decency that had prevented him from ſtimulating his ſon's creditors in his own character, only ſerved to ſhew him more clearly in what light his conduct would appear to the world, when it ſhould be known (as, if his confinement continued, it muſt be), that Captain Conway had been confined for debts which none but a young man (of Conway's ſituation) improperly curbed in his finances could have incurred: eſpecially as the world, to Mr. Conway's own knowledge, and to whoſe opinion he was too apt to bow implicitly, had never pronounced him an extravagant man or a gambler. It is true it had univerſally concurred in calling him generous, which in his father's opinion was almoſt equivalent

equivalent to extravagant; but since the *world* had chosen to alter the term, no substantial plea or excuse remained for him, and he found himself in danger of hearing his conduct arraigned and reprobated by every spendthrift, who would make no scruple at the same time to call his *frugality* avaricious meanness.

Thus forced against his will to repent his measures, and hampered by their effects, Mr. Conway suffered two more days to elapse without taking any methods to procure Conway's enlargement, or even his removal. It is true he had ordered him a physician—but, fearful of publishing the story by recommending one of eminence, he left it to their own choice, and, after some debates with himself as to the risk of a discovery, ventured to pay his son a visit.

Since Conway's imprisonment, he had refused almost constantly to take any nourishment; nor had he swallowed any thing

thing scarcely but water, nor taken any kind of rest; he had raved and been calm by turns.

When Mr. Conway entered the room, at the side opposite the door stood Conway, leaning against the wall, with his hands behind him; and near him a reverend looking old man in a shabby black coat, but whose benevolent countenance gave so much lustre to his appearance, that in some eyes it would have passed for a robe of state. He was earnestly entreating permission to feel his pulse, which Conway, with his eyes fixed wildly on the door, was civilly but positively refusing. Mr. Conway was too much shocked at his haggard countenance to advance or speak to him. Conway looked slightly at his father, but apparently without recollecting him: he bowed, however, as at the entrance of a stranger, and was persisting in his refusal to the physician, whom from time

to time he thanked for his trouble, when the turnkey venturing to ſhew his face from behind Mr. Conway, where he had ſheltered himſelf, Conway in an inſtant ſprung towards him; but the wary jailor, forcibly dragging Mr. Conway on the outſide, ſecured the door, and requeſted him not to repeat his viſit till the priſoner was calmer—declaring he never entered the room but at the hazard of his life. Mr. Conway wanted no perſuaſion to depart; but he wiſhed to hear the opinion of the phyſician, who at length made his appearance, and pronounced his patient in a delirious fever. Mr. Conway, not much impreſſed by his worn coat, rather ſcornfully preſented him his fee; which the old gentleman mildly declining, to Mr. Conway's infinite aſtoniſhment, aſked, as if fearful of diſtreſſing him by the queſtion, "Whether he was related to the young gentleman,

gentleman, and whether he could direct him to his creditors?"

Mr. Conway was too much embarrassed to speak.

"His mind seems very much oppressed. I wish it may be in my power," continued the benevolent old man, "to remove him from hence, if his debts are not *very* heavy."

"Pray, sir," cried Mr. Conway, "let me beg—" still presenting his purse, "let me entreat you not to think of any such thing!"

"Pardon me, sir!" said the old gentleman timidly; "you seem to know something of this young man. I would not be thought inquisitive—but if his friends cannot—if he be not deserving of such a punishment——"

"Neither, sir!" cried Mr. Conway, raising his voice from shame and anger.

"Then nothing shall prevent me, if his

his friends renounce him unjustly, from assisting him to the utmost of my abilities," rejoined the physician.

"You force me to tell you, sir," said Mr. Conway throwing down his pocket-book, "that you have no right to press an obligation upon——" *my son*, he was on the point of saying: but his prudence overcame his pride, as the physician's generosity had already conquered his avarice; for the pocket-book contained more than treble the sum required; though it is a matter of doubt whether the physician's example would have been efficacious, had not Mr. Conway felt his own riches and consequence, though he was unknown, insulted by the offer. He immediately departed, without staying to give any directions for the disposal of the overplus, though the physician called after him to beg his address, than to give which nothing was farther from his intentions.

When the physician returned to his patient, which he did immediately after the departure of Mr. Conway, he found him more tractably inclined, though less reasonable. With some little trouble he was persuaded to go to bed; and the good doctor, who began to be particularly interested for him when he heard him in his delirium talk of his wife, and call himself Conway, determined to stay with him the whole night, in the benevolent hope of gathering something of his story from his ravings, in order to render him every assistance in his power. The name of Conway, as he *imagined*, had discovered to him the most material part of Conway's history; for he was the same physician who attended Ethelreda when she was carried away by Carloville, and who had in some of her moments of delirium repeated his name incessantly.

Dr. Felton was a man of a singular

dispo-

disposition: he delighted in scenes of distress, because he placed his greatest pleasure in relieving them. He was, too, so averse to receiving any testimonies of gratitude from those he had assisted, that he continually changed his name and place of abode, to evade every chance of meeting again with the very few who were inclined to go beyond bare expressions of gratitude.

He had lived some time within the rules of the King's-Bench, from whence he had discharged a few poor debtors, and visited all the sick, when Ethelreda was brought by Carloville to lodgings he had fixed upon for her. The people of the house no sooner perceived she was sick, than they applied to Dr. Bevan, as he then called himself, who, according to his benevolent custom, visited her, and supplied her with medicines. Her sudden disappearance, after he had attended her two days, vexed him extreme-

 ly;

ly; and the bank-note for his attendance, which he had no poſſible means of returning, ſeriouſly diſtreſſed him; as he concluded, from the ſolitary appearance of a woman ſo young and beautiful, that ſome embarraſſments muſt occaſion it.

Conway, therefore, whoſe wild ravings would otherwiſe have paſſed with the Doctor for the fantaſtic and accidental expreſſions of diſtraction, no ſooner pronounced his own name, than the extraordinary coincidence between his delirium and that of Ethelreda, ſuggeſted and confirmed the opinion at the ſame moment, that Conway's friends had either oppoſed their union, or cauſed their ſeparation. Such a ſurmiſe was of itſelf ſufficient to ſecure all the pity and good offices in the power of the Doctor to beſtow; which joined to the intereſting appearance of the two perſons who ſeparately had been thrown upon his care, made him reſolve to exert himſelf for the

the re-eſtabliſhment of Conway's health and future happineſs.

Mr. Conway, in returning to his own houſe, could think only of his ſon's madneſs; for he placed but little reliance on the ſkill of a phyſician who wore a ſhabby coat; and inſtead of believing it was a delirious fever, he concluded his indiſpoſition was a confirmed derangement: he was therefore particularly uneaſy at the thoughts of ſeeing him at liberty; and not able to deviſe any expedient to confine his ſon privately without the concurrence of this aſſuming phyſician, who thought proper to pay the debts of people in his ſtation, he was much againſt his will obliged to appoint another conference. Mr. Conway, who gave the phyſician to underſtand he only interfered as the friend of his patient's family, could neverthleſs but indifferently conceal the grief and anxiety with which he heard the Doctor's account

of Conway's alarming phrensy; and when he heard of his raving of Ethelreda and his marriage, he could not forbear from making exclamations of horror, which were all set down by the unsuspecting Dr. Felton to the score of humanity. The Doctor ventured to hint his suspicions of Conway's situation, as from his distraction he had partly gathered it; and Mr. Conway finding it necessary to range the Doctor on his side, informed him of the previous marriage of the lady, and of course the necessity of a separation. The Doctor, though grieved beyond measure at the melancholy story, concurred with Mr. Conway in some plans he proposed. It was his intention, with the Doctor's assistance, to send his son to Frampton-lodge, a small sporting-seat in the mountains, at some distance from Strathener Castle, till he recovered his madness, as he called it. He was, too, extremely pressing that Conway should

ſhould be inveigled to begin the journey immediately; but the Doctor, who uniformly called the diſorder a fever, declared the patient's life very uncertain at beſt, but abſolutely loſt if he were removed till after the near-approaching criſis of the malady.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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